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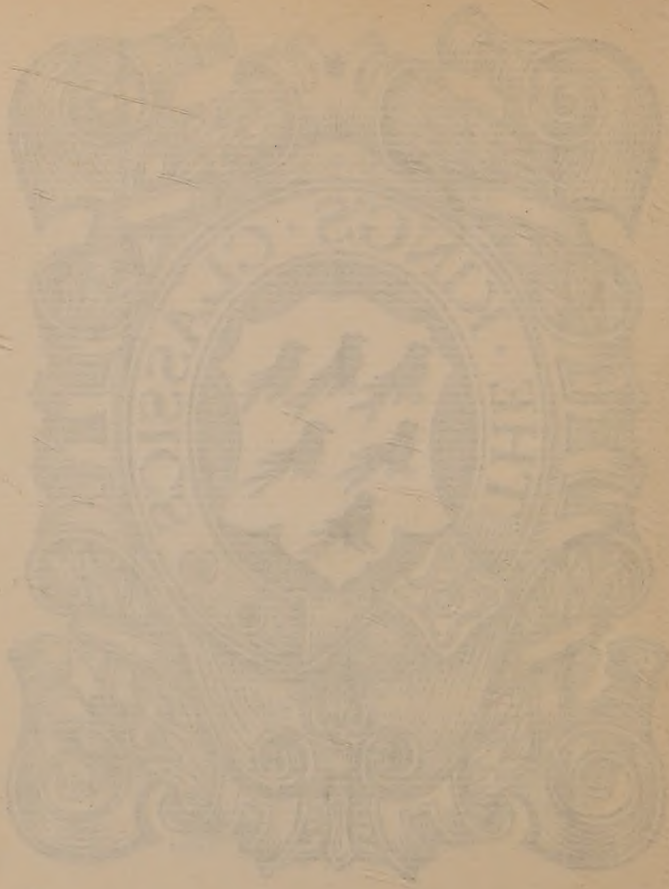

THE NUN'S RULE

Seal of Bishop Poore.

THE NUN'S RULE
BEING THE ANCREN RIWLE MODERNISED
BY JAMES MORTON
WITH INTRODUCTION
BY ABBOT GASQUET

18/18

LONDON: CHATTO AND WINDUS
BOSTON: JOHN W. LUCE AND
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ST. MARY OF THE PLAINS

THERE WAS A LADY WHO WAS BESIEGED BY HER FOES WITHIN AN EARTHEN CASTLE, AND HER LAND ALL DESTROYED, AND HERSELF QUITE POOR. THE LOVE OF A POWERFUL KING WAS, HOWEVER, FIXED UPON HER WITH SUCH BOUNDLESS AFFECTION, THAT TO SOLICIT HER LOVE HE SENT HIS AMBASSADORS, ONE AFTER ANOTHER, AND OFTEN MANY TOGETHER, AND SENT HER JEWELS BOTH MANY AND FAIR, AND SUPPLIES OF VICTUALS, AND THE AID OF HIS NOBLE ARMY TO KEEP HER CASTLE. SHE RECEIVED THEM ALL AS A CARELESS CREATURE, THAT WAS SO HARD-HEARTED THAT HE COULD NEVER GET ANY NEARER TO HER LOVE. WHAT WOULDEST THOU MORE? HE CAME HIMSELF AT LAST AND SHEWED HER HIS FAIR FACE, AS ONE WHO WAS OF ALL MEN THE MOST BEAUTIFUL TO BEHOLD; AND SPOKE MOST SWEETLY, AND SUCH PLEASANT WORDS, THAT THEY MIGHT HAVE RAISED THE DEAD FROM DEATH TO LIFE. pp. 294-5.

PREFACE

The Present Translation.—The mode of life which the code of rules here printed was intended to regulate is so unlike anything the modern world knows, that some few words of explanation seem called for by way of introduction. More than fifty years ago the Rev. James Morton, B.D., edited for the Camden Society a semi-Saxon tract on the life of female recluses, which was known as the *Ancren Riwle*, or, the *Regula Inclusarum*, that is, the Rule of recluses, or ancresses. Besides printing and editing the text of this thirteenth-century document, which would have been wholly unintelligible to most people, the editor furnished the English translation of the Rule, which, with some very slight changes, is now reprinted from the Camden Society volume.

Authorship of the Original Rule.—Mr. Morton devoted much care and attention to the work of determining the age of his manuscript, and to an endeavour to ascertain who was the author of the

original Rule. What was necessary in 1853 is not so important now, especially as the conclusions he arrived at may still be accepted as sound.[1] A brief statement as to the chief manuscript sources and as to the authorship seems, however, desirable. Of the text several copies are still extant: one, at Cambridge,[2] entitles the work *Ancren Wissé*, and this is said by Wanley [3] to be an abridgment of the Latin tract of Simon of Ghent, who was Bishop of Salisbury from 1297 to 1315. The British Museum possesses five copies; two have been much damaged by fire, but as now restored are still useful. A collation of three copies among the Cotton manuscripts [4] was made for the text printed by the Camden Society. One of these manuscripts (Cleopatra C. vi) would almost appear to be the original English text, since it is corrected and words inserted or struck out apparently at

[1] The whole question cannot be determined until we have the critical edition of the various texts; the late Professor Kölbing was at work on a monumental edition at the time of his death. His materials are now being dealt with by competent scholars.

[2] C.C.C.C. MS. 402.

[3] Appendix to Hickes' *Thesaurus*, p. 228. This opinion is adopted by the writer of the article on Simon of Ghent in the *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*

[4] Nero A. xiv; Titus D. xviii; Cleop. C. vi.

the time of composition, whilst on one page is a list of signs put "into this English book." One of the burnt copies is a French translation made from the English original, the second (Vit. E. vii) is a Latin translation. A copy in the library of Magdalen College, Oxford, which, from a note added at some later date, has led to the work being ascribed to Simon of Ghent, is shown by Mr. Morton in his "Introduction"[1] to the Camden Society volume to have been translated into Latin from the English version. Moreover, the same writer has shown that the curious Anglo-Saxon language in which the code of rules is written is certainly of earlier date than the close of the thirteenth century, and that the real author was probably Bishop Richard Poore, who held the See of Salisbury from 1217 to 1229, when he was translated by Pope Honorius III to Durham.

The Place for which the Rule was written.—It has usually been assumed with a great degree of probability, although there is nothing in the text to warrant any certain conclusion, that the nuns for whom this Rule was written dwelt at Tarrent in Dorsetshire. The place was called also Tarrent-Kaines, Kaineston, or Kingston, Benedictus Reginæ

[1] pp. viii–x.

locus super Tarrent, or Locus Reginæ super Tarrent. Leland tells us that it was situated on the river Stour, near Crayford bridge, some four miles below Blandford. The religious house or convent owed its origin to Ralph de Kahaines in the time of Richard I, and his son and successor William bestowed on the small establishment a tithe of the bread and other eatables consumed in the neighbouring mansion. About a century after its first foundation, Bishop Poore, who was born at Tarrent, became known as in some way a second founder, and his interest in the establishment evidently lasted during his life, as he came to Tarrent in his last sickness and died there in 1237.

Bishop Richard Poore's connection with Tarrent.—If we suppose that it was for the recluses at Tarrent that Bishop Poore composed the *Ancren Riwle*, his friendship for the convent, which survived his translation to the See of Durham, is easily understood ; since, as the writer of this Rule of Life, he was in a very true sense the spiritual father of the sisters dwelling there. In later times the nuns living at Tarrent embraced the Cistercian rule, and Eleanor, the Queen of Henry III, became a great benefactress of the house ; but at the time when this Rule was composed they followed the life of "Ancresses" or

"Recluses." The author of the *Ancren Riwle*, it is true, in his "Introduction" (p. 7) speaks of them as following "St. James's rule," and some antiquaries have described them as "belonging to the Order of St. James." Obviously, however, all that Bishop Poore—to assume that he was the writer—intended, was to explain that these sisters were to aim at being good Christians and to keep themselves, as St. James says, "pure and unspotted from the world," which they were to do without joining any of the existing Monastic Orders.

Meaning to be attached to the word Recluse or Ancress.—It may be useful to say a word as to the meaning to be attached to the word "ancress" or "recluse." It is not unfrequently supposed that any one, embracing this mode of life, at once entered a "living grave," and that the ceremony of enclosing an anchorite or ancress, to be seen in the old English service books, is to be regarded as little different to the "walling-up" of monks and nuns, about which so much has been written at various times. Whilst, no doubt, the life of a recluse was by no means one of ease and pleasure, there was obviously nothing in the nature of immuring in the case of the ordinary anchorite or ancress. Although the limits

of their enclosure were, as a rule, necessarily narrow, it would appear from the scanty remains of material buildings still preserved, and also from what may be gathered from the Rule of Bishop Poore, that rooms and surroundings were sufficiently ample for all practical purposes. There were some, of course, who felt themselves called by God to endure great sufferings, either in self-punishment for personal sins committed against God, or in order to avert from the world by their voluntary penances the chastisements of God for sins. Bishop Poore, in the *Ancren Riwle*, gives two examples of this, precisely in order to show that this is not the way along which all—even the recluses for whom he writes—are called to walk. It may not be uninteresting to quote what the Bishop relates as to penances practised in England in his own experience. "I know a man," he says, "who weareth at the same time both a heavy cuirass and haircloth, bound with iron about the middle too, and his arms with broad and thick bands, so that to bear the sweat of it is severe suffering ; he fasteth, he watcheth, he laboureth, and, Christ knoweth, he complaineth and saith that it doth not oppress him, and often asks me to teach him something wherewith he might give his body pain. God knoweth, yet he, the most sorrow-

ful of men, weepeth to me and saith that God hath quite forgotten him, because He sendeth him no great sickness. Whatever is bitter seems sweet to him for our Lord's sake. God knoweth, love doth this, because, as he often saith to me, he could never love God the less for any evil thing that He might do to him, even were He to cast him into hell with those who perish. And if any man confidently believe any such thing of him, he is more confounded than a thief taken with his theft. I know also a woman of like mind who suffereth little less. And what remains but to thank God for the strength that he giveth them?" (p. 289).

No lack of Vocations to the Solitary Life in Mediæval England.—Strange as it may appear in these days, there was in the middle ages and in England no lack of vocations to the special form of religious life led by anchorets and ancresses. In most cases, probably, the anchorholds, or dwelling-places of these recluses, were attached to churches or occupied some position within the precincts of religious houses. They were probably much more numerous throughout the country than is generally supposed. Very many of the greater monasteries had their hermits or anchorets, and they were speci-

ally numerous, curiously enough, in the towns and cities, whilst not a few villages are known to have had an anchoret or ancress living within the narrow bounds of a small room or two built against the church wall. The mention of these recluses in mediæval wills is sufficient evidence that their life of prayer and mortification was fully appreciated by our forefathers.

In some cases Ancresses lived together. —As a rule, no doubt, the ancress was a solitary in the strict sense ; that is, she inhabited her cell alone, no sister, or sisters, sharing the building with her or living with her, except perhaps her "maiden" or servant to attend upon her. There are, however, instances where a house or anchorage had several recluses living in it, though even here probably they lived as recluses with little in common, somewhat as the Carthusians now live the solitary life. In the churchyard of St. George's Chapel at Shrewsbury, for instance, there was a building inhabited by a good many ancresses. In the case of Tarrent we learn from the *Ancren Riwle* that there were three sisters living in the house at one time. "I know not," says Bishop Poore, "any anchoress that with more abundance, or more honour, hath all that is necessary to

her than ye three have" (p. 144). Besides these sisters in religion, each of the ancresses had a servant to attend to her wants; and the last portion of the Rule is, as the writer says, about "your maids, and how you ought kindly to instruct them" (p. 12). Towards these servants the ancress is told "to be very different from the mistress of a family," and the maid on her part is to protect the solitary from unnecessary intrusion. "When you have to go to your parlour window," says the Rule, "learn from your maid who it is that is come, for it may be some one whom you ought to shun" (p. 50).

The Out-Sisters.—In the case of an ancress living alone, according to Bishop Poore, if she "hath not her food at hand, let two women be employed." For these "out-sisters" minute and interesting rules are given, which are worth quoting at some length. One of these sisters "stays always at home, the other goes out when necessary. And let her (who goes out) be very plain, or of sufficient age; and as she goeth by the way let her go singing her prayers; and hold no conversation with man or with woman; nor sit, nor stand, except the least possible, until she come home. Let her go nowhere else, but to the place whither she is sent. Without leave, let her neither

eat nor drink abroad. Let the other be always within and never go out of the gate without leave. Let both be obedient to their dame in all things, sin only excepted. Let them possess nothing unknown to their mistress, nor accept nor give anything without her permission. They must not let any man in ; nor must the younger speak with any man without leave ; nor go out of town without a trusty companion, nor sleep out. If she cannot read her 'Hours' in a book, let her say them with *Pater-nosters* and *Ave Marias* ; and do the work she is commanded to do, without grudging. Let her have her ears always open to her mistress. Let neither of the women either carry to her mistress or bring from her any idle tales, or new tidings, nor sing to one another, nor speak any worldly speeches, nor laugh, nor play, so that any man who saw it might turn it to evil. . . . Their garments should be of such a shape, and all their attire such, that it may be easily seen to what life they are dedicated. Let them observe cautiously their manners, so that nobody may find fault with them, neither in the house, nor out of the house" (p. 321).

The Life of the Ancress one of Poverty. —The life of the ancress was one of poverty, and ordinarily she lived upon alms. "Ye anchorites," says

the Rule, "have taken to yourselves Mary's part.—Housewifery is Martha's part, and Mary's part is quietness and rest from all the world's din, that nothing may hinder her from hearing the voice of God. Martha's office is to feed and clothe poor men, as the mistress of a house. On the other hand, an anchoress ought to take sparingly only that which is necessary for her. She must live upon alms, as frugally as ever she can, and not gather that she may give it away afterwards. She is not a housewife, but a church anchoress" (p. 315). The good sisters of Tarrent in this way were well provided for, as we learn from this Rule. "Ye take no thought for food or clothing," writes the Bishop, "neither for yourselves nor for your maidens. Each of you hath from one friend all that she requireth; nor need that maiden seek either bread, or that which is eaten with bread further than at his hall" (p. 144). Who this benefactor was we are not told; but if the supposition as to Tarrent be correct we may be sure that it was one of the descendants of Ralph de Kahaines, who had bestowed upon this convent a tithe of all that was consumed in his establishment. It was possibly here, when they came to seek their pittances "at his hall," that the serving maidens of the recluses had to gladly "suffer

insolence from Slurry, the cook's boy, who washeth dishes in the kitchen" (p. 287).

Situation of the Anchorhold near the Church.—Here, as no doubt generally was the case, the anchorhold of Tarrent was situated next to the church, with a window looking into God's house. The sisters are told, for example, not to talk "out of the church window," but to "respect it for the sake of the Holy Sacrament"; which they see through it (p. 54). It was no doubt at this opening into the church that they prayed in sight of the Blessed Sacrament suspended over the altar. The general place for conversation was the window of the parlour, which was protected by a grille, inside of which was a black curtain and a shutter of wood. This place of talking was to be avoided whenever it might be without inconvenience. "My dear sisters," says the Bishop, "love your windows as little as possible; and see that they be small—the parlour's smallest and narrowest. Let the cloth upon them be twofold: black cloth; the cross white, within and without. The black cloth doth less harm to the eyes, is thicker against the wind, more difficult to see through and keeps its colour better against the wind and other things. See also that your parlour windows be always fast on every

side and likewise well shut" (p. 41). A recluse, also, was not to give way to any inclination to satisfy curiosity by putting her head out of her window. "A peering anchoress, who is always thrusting her head outward," the Bishop compares to "an untamed bird in a cage."

Devotions of the Recluses.—A considerable portion of this Rule is taken up with minute directions about the prayers, liturgical and private, the saying of which formed the chief occupation of these recluses. They were to remember, as the Bishop tells them in one place, that their irreproachable lives and fervent prayers were to be the chief stay, or "anchor," of Holy Church amid the storms of worldly strife and passion. The two meals which they had each day were to be eaten in silence, "for if other religious persons do so, as you well know," says the Rule, "ye ought before all." If, however, "any one hath a guest whom she holds dear, she may cause her maid, as in her stead, to entertain her friend with glad cheer; and she shall have leave to open her window once or twice, and make signs to her of gladness at seeing her" (p. 54).

Rule of Silence.—Silence was kept by the sisters during the greater part of the day, and every

Friday in the year was observed in complete and unbroken silence. In Advent and in the Ember week, two days were thus kept without talking, and in Lent three days; whilst the whole of the Holy week "until noon in Easter eve" strict silence was enjoined. During all these times only necessary talking was permitted, either to the serving-maid, or to some stranger who had come from a distance in ignorance of the regulation. Throughout this Rule of Bishop Poore the fact that he lays great stress upon the government of the tongue is apparent. By every means he strives to insist upon the evils which come from gossiping. "People say of anchoresses," he writes in one place, "that almost every one hath an old woman to feed her ears; a prating gossip who tells her all the tales of the land; a magpie that chatters to her of everything that she sees or hears; so that it is a common saying, 'From miln and from market, from smithy and from nunnery, men bring tidings.' Christ knows, this is a sad tale; that a nunnery, which should be the most solitary place of all, should be evened to those very three places in which there is the most idle discourse. But would to God, dear sisters, that all the others were as free as ye are of such folly" (p. 67).

The Life of an Ancress not Light or Easy.—As we read the injunctions contained in this Rule we cannot fail to admit that the life of one of these ancresses was neither idle nor easy ; and yet we can have no doubt, from the records of the past, that it was embraced with joy and eagerness. The sisters eat "no flesh nor lard except in great sickness," at any time ; and during half the year they fasted strictly every day, "except Sundays." Their time was fully occupied by their devotions and by such work for the church and for the poor as they were able to undertake. They began the day's work by prayer ; and "when ye are quite dressed," says the Rule, "sprinkle yourselves with holy water, which ye should have always with you. And think upon God's flesh and on His blood, which is over the high altar, and fall upon your knees towards it. Thus shall you do also when the priest elevates it at the Mass, and before the confession, when you are to receive the host" (p. 14), which communion, as the Bishop recommended, should be received fifteen times in the year.

The Daily Life and Work.—Then, after having adored the Most Holy Sacrament on the altar, the sisters were to fall on their knees before their crucifixes and begin the day with salutations to their

Redeemer as represented in His crucified image before their eyes. After this they were "to turn to Our Lady's image and kneel, saying the 'Ave' five times; lastly, kneel or bow to the other images and to your relics, namely, to the saints to whom you have, through affection, dedicated your altars, so much the more readily if any of them be hallowed" (p. 15). Then followed the "Hours" of the Blessed Virgin, the Litany, and the Office for the Dead with other prayers. Above all other helps to leading this life of prayer and penance the Bishop sets the Blessed Eucharist. "Believe firmly," he says, "that all the power of the devil melteth away through the grace of the Holy Sacrament, which ye see elevated above all, as oft as the priest saith mass and consecrateth the Virgin's child, Jesus, the Son of God, who sometimes descendeth bodily to your inn, and humbly taketh His lodging within you. God knoweth, she is too weak and too evil-hearted, who, with the aid of such a guest, fighteth not bravely" (p. 201). Besides this, he writes, "confession, holy water, prayers and holy meditations, benedictions, kneelings, and every good word and work wash small sins, though we may not say all sins, but confession is always the head of all"—"this ought to be often made" (p. 244). For after

all, like every other spiritual writer, Bishop Poore insists on the obvious fact that the foundation and most essential part of the higher life is in the strict observance of what he calls "the ten old commandments" (p. 6). Upon these are built up the works of obedience, chastity, and stability which are looked for in the lives of all recluses. The life was hard, but, as the Bishop says, "Nothing is ever so hard that love doth not make it tender and soft and sweet. 'Love maketh all things easy.' What do men and women endure for false love, and would endure more! And what is more to be wondered at is, that love which is faithful and true, and sweeter than any other love, doth not overmaster us as doth sinful love" (p. 289).

The Avoidance of External Cares.—Very earnestly did Bishop Poore desire that those who followed his Rule of Life should avoid external cares as much as possible. The domestic cat is the only animal he permits them to have. "Ye shall not possess any beast, my dear sisters, except only a cat. An anchoress that hath cattle appears as Martha was, a better housewife than anchoress, nor can she in any wise be Mary with peacefulness of heart. For then she must think of the cow's fodder and of the herdsman's hire, flatter the hayward, defend herself when

her cattle is shut up in the pinfold, and moreover pay the damage. Christ knoweth, it is an odious thing when people in the town complain of anchoresses' cattle. If, however, any one must needs have a cow, let her take care that she neither annoy nor harm any one, and that her own thoughts be not fixed thereon. An anchoress ought not to have anything that draweth her heart outward. Carry ye on no traffic. An anchoress that is a buyer and seller selleth her soul to the chapman of hell" (p. 316).

Anchorholds not to be the Deposits of Rich Men's Goods.—Further, the Bishop reprobates the practice which mediæval wills show was not uncommon, of anchorites or ancresses taking charge of different kinds of property, either belonging to the Church or to lay people. The fact that recluses did not wander forth or leave their cells unguarded, no doubt suggested anchorholds as safe places for the deposit of valuables. The Bishop, however, says to his nuns: "Do not take charge of other men's property in your house, nor their cattle, nor their clothes, neither receive under your care the church vestments nor the chalice, unless force compel you, or great fear, for oftentimes much harm has come from such caretaking" (p. 317).

The Life of an Ancress not to be Idle.— They are not, however, to lead an idle life, which the Bishop reprobates most strongly, but their work is to be simple and useful. They are to make "no purses and blodbendes [or bandages] of silk, but shape and sew and mend church vestments, and poor people's clothes, and help to clothe themselves and their domestics." Lastly, as a warning what not to do, he says that "an anchoress must not become a schoolmistress, nor turn her house into a school for children. Her maiden may, however, teach any little girl concerning whom it might be doubtful whether she should learn among the boys" (p. 319).

FRANCIS AIDAN GASQUET.

INTRODUCTION

"THE upright love thee," saith the bride to the bridegroom. There is a Law or Rule of Grammar, of Geometry, and of Theology; and of each of these sciences there are special rules. We are to treat of the Theological Law, the rules of which are two: the one relates to the right conduct of the heart; the other, to the regulation of the outward life.

"The upright love thee, O Lord," saith God's bride to her beloved bridegroom, those who love thee rightly, those are upright; those who live by a rule. And ye, my dear sisters, have oftentimes importuned me for a Rule. There are many kinds of rules; but, among them all, there are two of which, with God's help, I will speak, by your request. The one rules the heart, and makes it even and smooth, without knot or wound-mark of evil or accusing con-

science, that saith, "In this thou doest wickedly," or, "This is not amended yet as well as it ought to be." This rule is always within you, and directs the heart. And this is that charity which the Apostle describes, "Out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." "Continue," saith the Psalmist, "thy mercy to them that know thee," by faith unfeigned, "and thy righteousness," that is, rectitude of life, "to those who are upright in heart," in other words, who regulate all their wishes by the rule of the divine will; such persons are rightly called good. The Psalmist says, "Do good, O Lord, to those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts." To them it is said that they may delight, namely, in the witness of a good conscience. "Be glad in the Lord and rejoice all ye that are upright in heart," that is, all whom that supreme law hath directed aright which directs all things rightly. Concerning which Augustine saith, "Nothing must be sought contrary to the rule of the supreme authority;" and the Apostle, "Let us all abide by the same rule." The other rule is all outward, and ruleth the body

and the deeds of the body. It teaches how men should, in all respects, bear themselves outwardly; how they should eat and drink, dress, take rest, sleep, and walk. And this is bodily exercise, which, according to the Apostle, profiteth little, and is, as it were, a rule of the science of mechanics, which is a branch of geometry; and this rule is only to serve the other. The other is as a lady; this is as her handmaid; for, whatever men do of the other outwardly, is only to direct the heart within.

Do you now ask what rule you anchoresses should observe? Ye should by all means, with all your might and all your strength, keep well the inward rule, and for its sake the outward. The inward rule is always alike. The outward is various, because every one ought so to observe the outward rule as that the body may therewith best serve the inward. Now then, is it so that all anchoresses may well observe one rule? "All may and ought to observe one rule concerning purity of heart," that is, a clean unstained conscience, without any reproach of sin that is not remedied by confession. This the lady

rule effects, which governs and corrects and smoothes the heart and the conscience of sin, for nothing maketh it rugged but sin only. To correct it and smooth it is the good office and the excellent effect of all religion and of every religious order. This rule is framed not by man's contrivance, but by the command of God. Therefore, it ever is and shall be the same, without mixture and without change; and all men ought ever invariably to observe it. But all men cannot, nor need they, nor ought they to keep the outward rule in the same unvaried manner, "that is to say, in regard to observances that relate to the body." The external rule, which I called the hand-maid, is of man's contrivance; nor is it instituted for any thing else but to serve the internal law. It ordains fasting, watching, enduring cold, wearing haircloth, and such other hardships as the flesh of many can bear and many cannot. Wherefore, this rule may be changed and varied according to every one's state and circumstances. For some are strong, some are weak, and may very well be excused, and please God with less; some are learned, and some

are not, and must work the more, and say their prayers at the stated hours in a different manner; some are old and ill favoured, of whom there is less fear; some are young and lively, and have need to be more on their guard. Every anchoress must, therefore, observe the outward rule according to the advice of her confessor, and do obediently whatever he enjoins and commands her, who knows her state and her strength. He may modify the outward rule, as prudence may direct, and as he sees that the inward rule may thus be best kept.

No anchorite, by my advice, shall make profession, that is, vow to keep any thing as commanded, except three things, that is, obedience, chastity, and constancy as to her abode; that she shall never more change her convent, except only by necessity, as compulsion and fear of death, obedience to her bishop or superior; for, whoso undertaketh any thing, and promises to God to do it as his command, binds herself thereto, and sinneth mortally in breaking it, if she brake it wilfully and intentionally. If, however, she does not vow it, she may, nevertheless, do it, and leave it off

when she will, as of meat and drink, abstaining from flesh or fish, and all other such things relating to dress, and rest, and hours, and prayers. Let her say as many, and in such a way, as she pleases. These and such other things are all in our free choice, to do or to let alone whenever we choose, unless they are vowed. But charity or love, and meekness and patience, truthfulness, and keeping the ten old commandments, confession, and penitence, these and such others, some of which are of the old law, some of the new, are not of man's invention, nor a rule established by man, but they are the commandments of God, and, therefore, every man is bound and obliged to keep them, and you most of all; for they govern the heart, and its government is the main point concerning which I have to give directions in this book, except in the beginning and in the concluding part of it. As to the things which I write here concerning the external rule, ye, as my dear sisters, observe them, our Lord be thanked, and through his grace ye shall do so, the longer the better; and yet I would not have you to make a vow to observe them

as a divine command; for, as often thereafter as ye might break any of them it would too much grieve your heart and frighten you, so that you might soon fall, which God forbid, into despair, that is, into hopelessness and distrust of your salvation. Therefore, my dear sisters, that which I shall write to you in the first, and especially in the last part of your book, concerning your service, you should not vow it, but keep it in your heart, and perform it as though you had vowed it.

If any ignorant person ask you of what order you are, as you tell me some do, who strain at the gnat and swallow the fly, answer and say that ye are of the order of Saint James, who was God's Apostle, and for his great holiness was called God's brother. If such answer seems to him strange and singular, ask him, "What is order, and where he may find in holy writ religion more plainly described and manifested than in the canonical epistle of St. James?" He saith what religion is, and what right order: "Pure religion and without stain is to visit and assist widows and fatherless children, and to keep himself pure and

unstained from the world." Thus does St. James describe religion and order. The latter part of his saying relates to anchorites: for there are two parts of this description, which relates to two kinds of religious men; to each of them his own part applies, as you may hear. There are in the world good religious men, especially some prelates and faithful preachers, to whom belongs the former part of that which St. James said; who are, as he said, those who go to assist widows and orphans. The soul is a widow who has lost her husband, that is, Jesus Christ, by any grievous sin. He is likewise an orphan who, through his sin, hath lost the Father of Heaven. To go and visit such, and to comfort and assist them with food of sacred instruction, this, saith St. James, is true religion. The latter part of his saying relates to anchorites, to your religious order, as I said before, who keep yourselves pure and unspotted from the world, more than any other religious persons. Thus the Apostle St. James describes religion and order; neither white nor black does he speak of in his order, as many do, who strain at the gnat and swallow the

fly, that is, exert much strength where little is required. Paul, the first anchorite, Antony and Arsenius, Macharius, and the rest, were not they religious persons and of St. James's order? And St. Sara, Syncletica, and many other such men and women with their coarse mattresses and their hard hair-cloths, were not they of a good order? And whether white or black, as foolish people ask you, who think that order consists in the kirtle or the cowl, God knoweth nevertheless, they may well wear both, not, however, as to clothes, but as God's bride singeth of herself, "I am black and yet white," she saith, dark outwardly and bright within. In this manner answer ye any one who asks you concerning your order, and, whether white or black, say that ye are both through the grace of God, and of the order of St. James, which he wrote —the latter part—what I said before, "to keep himself pure and unstained from the world;" herein is religion, and not in the wide hood, nor in the black, nor in the white, nor in the gray cowl. There however, where many are gathered together, they should, for the sake of unity, make a point of sameness

of clothes, and of other outward things, that the outward sameness may denote the sameness of one love and of one will, which they have in common under their habit, which is one, which every one has the same as another; and also of other kind of properties, that they all united have one love and one will, every one the same as another. Let them look well that they do not lie. Thus it is in a convent; but, wherever a woman liveth, or a man liveth by himself alone, be he hermit or anchorite, of outward things whereof scandal cometh not, it is not necessary to take so much care. Hearken now to Micah, God's prophet: "I will shew thee, O man," saith the holy Micah, God's prophet, "I will shew thee truly what is good, and what religion is, and what order, and what holiness God requires of thee." Mark this, understand it, do good, and deem thyself ever weak, and with fear and love walk with God thy Lord. Wherever these things are, there is true religion, and there is right order; and to do all the other things and leave this undone is mere trickery and deceit. All that a good recluse does or thinks, according to

the external rule, is altogether for this end; it is only as an instrument to promote this true religion; it is only a slave to help the lady to rule the heart.

Now, my dear sisters, this book I divide into eight distinctions, which ye call parts, and each part treats separately, without confusion, of distinct matters, and yet each one falleth in properly after another, and the latter is always connected with the former.

The first part treats entirely of your religious service.

The next is, how you ought, through your five senses, to keep your heart, wherein is order, religion, and the life of the soul. In this part there are five chapters or sections concerning the five senses, which guard the heart as watchmen when they are faithful, and which speak concerning each sense separately in order.

The third part is of a certain kind of bird, to which David, in the Psalter, compares himself, as if he were an anchorite, and how the nature of those birds resembles that of anchorites.

The fourth part is of fleshly, and also of spiritual

temptations, and of comfort against them, and of their remedies.

The fifth part is of confession.

The sixth part is of penitence.

The seventh part is of a pure heart, why men ought and should love Jesus Christ, and what deprives us of his love, and hinders us from loving him.

The eighth part is entirely of the external rule; first, of meat and drink and of other things relating thereto; thereafter, of the things that ye may receive, and what things ye may keep and possess; then of your clothes and of such things as relate thereto; next of your tonsure, and of your works, and of your blood-letting; lastly, the rule concerning your maids, and how you ought kindly to instruct them.

PART I.—Of Divine Service.

WHEN you first arise in the morning bless yourselves with the sign of the cross and say, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen," and begin directly "Creator Spirit, come," with your eyes and your hands raised up toward heaven, bending forward on your knees upon the bed, and thus say the whole hymn to the end, with the versicle, "Send forth thy Holy Spirit," and the prayer, "God, who didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people." After this, putting on your shoes and your clothes, say the Paternoster and the Creed, and then, "Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us! Thou who didst condescend to be born of a virgin, have mercy on us!" Continue saying these words until you be quite dressed. Have these words much in use, and in your mouth as often as ye may, sitting and standing.

When ye are quite dressed, sprinkle yourselves with holy water, which ye should have always with you,

and think upon God's flesh, and on his blood, which is over the high altar, and fall on your knees toward it, with this salutation, "Hail, thou author of our creation! Hail, thou price of our redemption! Hail, thou who art our support during our pilgrimage! Hail, O reward of our expectation!"

Be Thou our joy,
Who art to be our meed.
Our glory be in thee,
Through endless time.
Abide with us, O Lord!
Remove dark night;
Wash off all guilt;
Grant godly balm.
Glory to thee, O Lord,
Thou virgin's Son.

Thus shall you do also when the priest elevates it at the mass, and before the confession, when you are about to receive the host; after this, fall on your knees to your crucifix, with these five greetings:—

"We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee, who, by thy holy cross, hast redeemed the world. We adore thy cross, O Lord. We commemorate thy glorious passion. Pity us, O thou who didst suffer for us. Hail, O holy Cross, worthy tree, whose precious wood bore the treasure of the world! Hail,

O Cross, who in the body of Christ wast dedicated, and with his limbs adorned, as with pearls. O Cross, wood triumphant over the world. True safety, hail! Among woods none such, for leaf, flower, bud. O Christian medicine, heal, heal the sound and the sick." And with this saying, beat on your breast, "What human power is unable to do, be done in thy name." Whoso does not know these five, may say the first five, "We adore thee, O Christ," five times, kneeling and blessing yourselves at every one of these greetings; and at these words "have mercy on us, thou who didst suffer for us," beat your breast, and kiss the earth crossed with the thumb. Thereafter turn to our Lady's image and kneel, saying the "Ave" five times; lastly, kneel or bow to the other images and to your relics, namely, to the saints to whom you have, through affection, dedicated your altars, so much the more readily if any of them are hallowed.

Immediately, thereafter, say our Lady's nocturnal service, in this wise: if it is a workday, fall to the earth; if it is a holiday, bowing somewhat downward, and say the Paternoster and Creed, both in a low voice, and then stand up and say, "O Lord, open thou my lips," and make the sign of the cross on your mouth with the thumb, and say, "God be our help;" then

a large cross from above the forehead down to the breast, with the three fingers, and fall to the earth, if it is a workday, with the Gloria Patri, or bow downward, if it is a holiday, as far as the words "sicut erat." Thus do at every Gloria Patri, and at the beginning of the Venite, at this word, "Venite adoremus," and at Ave Maria, and wheresoever you hear Mary's name named, and at every Paternoster that occurs in the hours, and in the Creed, at this word, "natus ex Maria virgine," and at the collect of every service, and at the Litany, and at the last verse of every hymn, and at the last verse but one of this Psalm, "Bless the Lord, all ye works of the Lord," at this verse, "Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost;" and at all these, if it is workday, fall to the earth, if it is holiday, bow somewhat downward. And, at the beginning of every time of service, at this word, "God be our helper," make the sign of the cross, as I taught you before; and at this word, "Come, O Creator Spirit," bow or kneel, according as the day is; and at this word, "Be mindful of us, O author of our salvation," fall always down; and at this word, "At thy birth thou didst take our form," kiss the earth, and also at the Te Deum, at this word, "Thou didst not abhor the virgin's womb," and at

the Mass Creed, at this word, "Of the virgin Mary, and was made man."

Let every one say her hours as she has written them, and say every service separately, as far as you can, in its own time, but rather too soon than too late. If ye cannot always keep to the right time, say the Nocturns by night in the winter; in the summer, at daybreak. This winter shall begin at Holy Rood-day in autumn, and continue on thereafter. Prime shall be said in the winter early; in summer before daybreak; Pretiosa thereafter. If you have need from any emergency to speak, you may say Pretiosa before, and immediately after the nocturnal service if necessary. Nones always after meat; but when you sleep, say Nones after it during summer; but when you fast in winter, before meat; and in summer when you fast, the Sunday, after it; for you eat twice. At the one Psalm you shall stand, if you are at ease, and at the other, sit; and always rise up at the Gloria Patri and bow; whoever is able to stand, let her always stand, in God's name, in honour of our Lady; and at all the seven hours say Paternoster and Ave Maria, both before and after; Fidelium Animæ after every hour before the Paternoster; at three hours say the Creed, with the Paternoster, before Nocturns and

after Prime, and after the Compline; from that time till after Pretiosa, keep silence.

Immediately after vespers say your Placebo every night, when you are at ease; but, if it be the eve of a festival of nine lessons that comes on the morrow, before Compline or after Nocturn, say Dirige, with three Psalms, and with three lessons every night separately. On the anniversaries, that is, on the commemoration days of your dear friends, say all the nine, and, at the end of every Psalm, instead of Gloria Patri, say "Give them eternal rest, O Lord, and let continual light shine upon them." At Placebo, you may sit until the Magnificat, and also at Dirige, except at the lessons, and at the Miserere, and from Laudate throughout; at the end, instead of Benedicamus, say "Requiescant in pace." On the morrow, or at night, after the suffrages of the nocturnal service, say the Commendation, sitting during Psalms, and kneeling or standing during the prayers. If ye do thus every evening, Sunday night alone excepted, ye do so much the better.

With the Litany say seven Psalms, sitting or kneeling; say the fifteen Psalms on this wise: the first five for yourself and for all who do you good or befriend you; the next five for the peace of holy church; the

third five for all Christian souls. After the first five, "Lord have mercy upon us. Christ have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us." Paternoster. "O my God, save thy servants and handmaids, who hope in Thee. Let us pray. O God, whose property is always to have mercy and to spare, receive our prayer for forgiveness, and let Thy compassion and pity absolve us who are bound with the chain of our sins, through Jesus Christ our Lord." After the next five, say also, "Lord have mercy upon us: Christ have mercy upon us: Lord have mercy upon us." Paternoster. "May there be peace in thy strength, and abundance in thy strongholds." "O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of thy church, that, being delivered from all adversities, it may serve thee in security and freedom, through, etc." After the third five, which you shall say without Gloria Patri, "Lord have mercy upon us: Christ have mercy upon us: Lord have mercy upon us." Paternoster. Say, "Lord deliver their souls from the gate of hell. Let us pray." "Fidelium, etc." Say seven Psalms, and those fifteen psalms about undern time, for about such time as mass is sung in all religious communities, when our Lord suffered pain upon the cross, ye ought to be especially in prayers and supplications, and also from

Prime till mid-morrow, when the secular priests sing their masses.

Our lay brethren say thus their hours :—For Nocturns, on workdays, eight-and-twenty Paternosters ; on holidays, forty ; for vespers, fifteen ; for every other time, seven ; before Nocturns, Paternoster and Creed, kneeling on the ground on a workday, and bowing on a holiday ; and then whosoever can shall say, "O Lord, open thou my lips. O God, make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father, etc. Halleluia." And in Lent, "Praise be to thee, O Lord, eternal King of Glory." After the last, "Lord have mercy upon us : Christ have mercy upon us : Lord have mercy upon us." Paternoster. And after the Amen, "Through the Lord, let us bless the Lord ; thanks to God." And at all the other hours, thus begin and thus end ; but, at Compline, whosoever can shall begin, "Turn us, O God of our salvation ; " and at all the other hours, "O God, make speed to save me," omitting "O Lord, open thou my lips." If any of you will do this, she followeth here, as in other observances, much of our order, and I earnestly advise it. In this manner you may say, if you will, your Paternosters.

"Almighty God, Father, Son, and soothfast Holy

Ghost, even as ye three are one God, and one power, one wisdom, and one love, and yet wisdom is especially ascribed to thee in holy writ, thou dear Father; to thee wisdom, of thy Son; to thee love, of the Holy Ghost. Give me grace, Almighty God; inspire into me, ye three persons, these same three things: power to serve thee, wisdom to please thee, love and will to do it; power that I may do, wisdom that I may know what to do, love that I may be constrained to do all that is most approved by thee; as thou art full of every good thing, as there is no good wanting where these three are, power, wisdom, and love united together, that thou grant me them, O holy Trinity, in the worship of thee." Three Paternosters. I Believe. "Let us bless the Father and the Son, with the Holy Ghost; let us praise and highly extol him for ever." Let us pray: "Almighty and everlasting God, who hast given unto thy servants by the confession of the true faith to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of the divine Majesty to worship the unity, we beseech thee that in the steadfastness of this faith we may be defended always from all adversities, who livest and reignest, etc." Whoso hath this, or any other prayer to the holy Trinity, may say which he will.

"Sweet Jesus, thy mercy! Sweet Jesus, for my sins suspended on the cross; for the sake of the same five wounds by which thou didst thereon bleed, heal my soul, defiled with blood, of all the wounds wherewith it is wounded through my five senses, in the remembrance of them; so may it be, dear Lord." Five Paternosters. "Let all the earth worship thee, O God, sing of thee, and praise thy name with a psalm." Let us pray: "O righteous Judge, Jesu Christ." If thou canst not say this, say some other of the Cruces. "O God, who by the precious blood of thy only begotten son Jesus Christ, etc."

"For the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, that I may have them, and for the seven times that holy church singeth, that I may participate in them, whether asleep or awake; and for the seven petitions in the Paternoster against the seven chief deadly sins, that thou guard me against them and all their brood, and give me the seven happy beatitudes which thou, Lord, hast promised thine elect in thy blessed name." Seven Paternosters. vers. "Send forth thy spirit and they shall be created, and thou shalt renew the face of the earth." Let us pray: "O God, to whom every heart is open, and every wish speaketh, and from whom no secret is hid, purify, by the infusion of the

Holy Spirit, the thoughts of our heart, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily praise thee, through, etc. Hear, we beseech thee, O Lord, the prayers of thy suppliants, and forgive the sins of those who confess them to thee; that likewise of thy goodness, thou mayest grant us thy favour and peace, through, etc. O Lord, graciously hear the prayers of thy church."

"Because of the ten commandments, some or all of which I have broken, and in whatever other things I have tithed myself untruly toward thee, in repair of those breaches, to reconcile myself with thee, dear Lord." Ten paternosters; vers. "I have said, O Lord, have mercy upon me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. O God, whose property, etc."

"In honour, O Jesus Christ, of thy twelve apostles, that I may in all things follow their doctrine, and that, through their prayers, I may have the twelve branches of charity, which blossom, as St. Paul sheweth, blessed Lord." Twelve Paternosters. "They declared the works of the Lord and His Holiness." Let us pray: "Hear us, O God of our Salvation, and keep us safe by the protection of thy apostles, to whose doctrines thou hast granted us to be faithful, through, etc."

In the worship of those saints whom ye love best and most, say less or more as your heart inclines you, and that versicle afterwards, with their collect.

"For all those who have done me, said of me, or granted me any good, and for all such as work the six works of mercy, O merciful Lord." Six Paternosters. "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness remaineth for ever. Deign, O Lord, to reward all those who do good to us with eternal life, for thy name's sake." Who will may say this psalm, "To thee have I lifted up," before the Paternoster; and then, "Lord have mercy upon me: Christ have mercy: Lord have mercy."

"For all the souls that have departed in the belief of the four gospels which support all Christendom on four sides, give them in heaven the four marriage portions, gracious Lord." Four Paternosters; and, if you say nine, as there are nine orders of angels, that God through his grace and of his mercy may elevate them soon out of pain to their fellowship, ye do still better; and here also say "De profundis" before the Paternoster. "Lord have mercy upon us: Christ have mercy upon us: Lord have mercy upon us. From the gates of Hell, O Lord, deliver their souls." Let us pray: "O God the Creator and the Redeemer

of all the faithful, grant to the souls of thy servants remission of all their sins, that they may obtain the indulgence which they have always desired by their devout prayers."

At some time in the day or the night think upon and call to mind all who are sick and sorrowful, who suffer affliction and poverty, the pain which prisoners endure who lie heavily fettered with iron; think especially of the Christians who are among the heathen, some in prison, some in as great thraldom as is an ox or an ass; compassionate those who are under strong temptations; take thought of all men's sorrows, and sigh to our Lord that he may take care of them, and have compassion, and look upon them with a gracious eye; and, if you have leisure, repeat this Psalm, "I have lifted up mine eyes," etc. Pater noster. "Return, O Lord, how long, and be entreated in favour of thy servants:" Let us pray. "Stretch forth, O Lord, to thy servants and to thy handmaids the right hand of thy heavenly aid, that they may seek thee with all their heart, and obtain what they worthily ask through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In the mass, when the priest elevates God's body, say these verses, standing, "Behold the Saviour of the world; the word of the Father; a true sacrifice;

living flesh ; entire Godhead ; very man ; " and then fall down with this greeting, " Hail ! cause of our creation ; Hail ! price of our redemption ; Hail ! our support during our pilgrimage. Be thou our joy, who art about to be our reward. May our glory be in thee, for ever and ever. Abide with us, O Lord. Remove our darkness. Wash from us all our guilt. Grant a holy remedy. Glory be to thee, O Lord. But, is there any place in me into which my God may come who made heaven and earth ? Is it so, O Lord my God ? Is there in me any thing which may contain thee ? Wilt thou indeed come into my heart and inebriate it ? And do I embrace thee, my good wine ? What art thou to me ? Pity me, that I may speak. The house of my soul is too narrow that thou shouldst come into it. Let it be enlarged by thee. It is in ruins, repair it. I confess and know that it contains what is offensive to thine eyes. But who shall cleanse it, or to whom but thee shall I cry ? Cleanse thou me, O God, from my secret faults ; and from the sins of others spare thy servant. Have mercy, have mercy, have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy great mercy ; " and so the whole Psalm to the end, with Gloria Patri ; " O Christ hear us," twice ; " Lord have mercy upon us. Christ

have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us." "Our Father; I believe." "O my God, save thy servant, who putteth his trust in thee. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto thee." Let us pray: "Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that him whom we see darkly, and under a different form, on whom we feed sacramentally on earth, we may see face to face, and may be thought worthy to enjoy him truly and really, as he is, in heaven, through the same."

After the kiss of peace in the mass, when the priest consecrates, forget there all the world, and there be entirely out of the body; there in glowing love embrace your beloved Saviour who is come down from heaven into your breast's bower, and hold him fast until he shall have granted whatever you wish for.

About mid day whoso may, and whoso may not then at some other time, should think upon God's rood as much and as intently as ever she can, and of his precious sufferings; and thereafter begin the same five salutations which are written above; and also bowing the knee at every one, make the cross and bless, as is said there, and beat your breast, and say this kind of prayer, "We adore thee, O Christ, and we bless thee, who by thy holy cross hast redeemed the world;

we adore thy cross, O Lord; we meditate upon thy glorious passion. Have mercy upon us, O thou who didst suffer for us! Hail! O holy cross; tree of worth! Who alone wert worthy to bear the King and Lord of Heaven. Hail, O cross, which in body, etc."

"O glorious cross! O cross worthy of adoration! O precious wood and admirable sign, by which both the devil is overcome, and the world, through the blood of Christ, is redeemed!" Then rise up and begin this anthem, "Save us, O Christ;" and standing say this Psalm, "Jubilate," with the "Gloria," and after that the anthem; and say ever thus, "Save us, O Christ our Saviour, by the virtue of thy holy cross," and make the sign of the cross, "Thou who didst save Peter on the sea, have mercy upon us;" and beat on your breast, and then fall down and say twice, "O Christ hear us: Lord have mercy upon us: Christ have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us." Pater noster. Versicle, "Behold, O God, our Protector, and look upon the face of thy Christ." Let us pray: "O God, who didst ascend the holy cross, and hast enlightened the darkness of this world, we pray thee, O Lord, deign to enlighten our hearts and bodies; through the Lord." And afterwards

begin, "We adore thee, O Christ," the same as before all the five. The anthem, "Save us," as before; the Psalm, "To thee have I lifted up;" afterwards the whole anthem, and then, as before, fall to the earth; "O Christ hear us," twice. "Lord have mercy upon us. Christ have mercy upon us. Lord have mercy upon us:" Paternoster; the versicle, "Behold, O God, our shield." Let us pray: "Keep us, O Lord, in perpetual peace, whom by the wood of the holy cross thou hast vouchsafed to redeem, who livest and reignest with God the Father." Do exactly the same the third time, and the fourth and fifth time, and change nothing but the Psalms and the prayers. The first is, "O be joyful;" the next, "Unto thee have I lifted up;" the third, "They that trust;" the fourth, "Lord, my heart is not haughty." The fifth, "Praise the Lord in his sanctuary;" and in each there are five verses. The prayers are these: "O God, who didst ascend the holy cross;" "Be present with us, O Lord our God, and those whom thou makest to rejoice in the honour of that holy cross, defend also with its continual help."

"O God, who didst consent that thy son should undergo the painful cross for us, that thou mightest drive away from us the power of the enemy, grant to

us thy servants that we may obtain the grace of the resurrection, through the same Lord." "O God, who of thy only begotten Son." With, "O blessed and pure, O righteous Judge, Jesu Christ." And whoso cannot say these five prayers, should say always one; and whoso thinketh them too long may omit the Psalms.

"Sweet lady, Saint Mary, for that same great delight which thou hadst within thee, at the very time when Jesus God, the Son of God, after the salutation of the angel, took flesh and blood in thee and of thee, receive my salutation with the same 'Ave,' and make me to think little of every outward delight, and comfort me within, and by thy merits procure for me the joy of heaven; and as certainly as in the same flesh that he took of thee there was never sin, nor in thine, as I believe, after the same conception, whatever may have been before, cleanse my soul from fleshly sins: Hail, Mary," and so on to "The Lord is with thee." The Magnificat, standing. "Hail, Mary," to the end, five times, and then, thus: "Sweet Lady, St. Mary, for the same great joy that thou hadst when thou sawest that blissful child, born of thy pure body for the salvation of mankind, without any use of kinde, with whole

virginity and maiden's honour, heal me who through will am broken, as I fear, whatever I may be as to deed, and grant that I may in heaven behold thy joyful countenance, and behold her, and her maiden's honour, if I am not worthy to be blessed in her fellowship." Hail Mary full of grace; the Lord is with thee. "To the Lord I cried when I was in trouble," standing. Ave, also, as before, five times.

"Sweet Lady, Saint Mary, for the same great joy which thou hadst when thou sawest thy dear Son, after his sweet precious death, arise to joyful life, his body sevenfold brighter than the sun, grant me that I may die with him and rise in him; die to the world, and live spiritually; share in his sufferings as his follower on earth, that I may be his companion in blessedness in heaven; for the great joy which thou hadst, O Lady, of his joyful resurrection, after thy great sorrow; after my great sorrow in which I ever am here, lead me to thy joy." "Hail Mary" unto "The Lord is with thee." "Deal bountifully with thy servant." "Hail Mary" five times.

"Sweet Lady, Saint Mary, for the great joy which thou hadst when thou sawest thy bright blissful Son, whom the Jews thought to imprison in the stifling

tomb, as another mortal man, without hope of rising again; sawest him so gloriously and graciously, on Holy Thursday, ascend up to his joy into his kingdom of heaven; grant to me that I may with him cast all the world under my feet, and ascend up now in heart and mind; and when I die that I may ascend spiritually, and at the judgment day all bodily, into the blessedness of heaven." Hail Mary. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Sion." "Hail Mary," all through, five times.

"Sweet Lady, Saint Mary, for the same great joy that filled all the earth, when thy sweet blissful Son received thee into his infinite bliss, and with his blissful arms placed thee on the throne, and a queenly crown on thy head brighter than the sun; O high, heavenly queen, so receive these salutations from me on earth, that I may blissfully salute thee in heaven." Hail Mary. "Unto thee lift I up." Hail Mary, five times, and then this versicle: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee; and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." Let us pray: "We beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts, that we, who, by the message of the angel, have known the incarnation of Christ thy Son, may be brought by his cross and suffering to the glory of his resurrection, through the same Jesus

Christ our Lord. Amen. Hail, Queen of Heaven! Hail Sovereign of angels!

> Hail, O Root, thou Sacred Portal
> Whence the world's light hath arisen!
> Hail to thee, thou glorious Virgin,
> Beautiful above all women!
> O most comely One, bestead us,
> Plead our cause with Christ for ever."

Versicle, "A rod shall come forth from the stem of Jesse, and a flower shall grow out of his root." Let us pray: "O God, who didst not disdain the virgin's womb, etc. Be glad, O mother of God, unspotted virgin; be glad because thou hast conceived joy from the angel; be glad because thou hast brought forth the brightness of light eternal; be glad, O mother; be glad, O holy mother of God. Thou, alone, O virgin, art a mother without a mate. Every creature praises thee, the mother of the son of light. Be a gracious mediator in our behalf." Versicle, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and shall bring forth a son. Be glad, O virgin; be glad, O mother of God, and be exceeding joyful, O Mary. Let the congregation of all the faithful rejoice in thy praises. Constant and pious lady, make us to be glad with thee before the Lord." Versicle, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive." Let us

pray: "O God, who for our eternal salvation, etc." "Dear mother of the Redeemer, the gate through which heaven is entered, and star of the sea; succour thy falling people, who wish to rise. Thou who, whilst nature wondered, didst bring forth thy holy Creator, a virgin both before and after, receiving that salutation from the lips of Gabriel, have compassion on the sinful." Here say, "Hail Mary," fifty or a hundred times, more or less, as ye have leisure. Lastly, this versicle, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Let us pray: "O holy Virgin of Virgins, who gave birth to thy son the vanquisher of Satan." Whoso will may stand up immediately after the first prayer. "We beseech thee, O Lord, grant us thy grace," and then say her number of "Hail Maries." After the last psalm, "Unto thee lift I up," and always before the psalm begin one "Hail Mary," as far as "the Lord is with thee," and say the psalm standing. These psalms are taken after the five letters of our Lady's name. Whoso pays attention to this word Maria may find in it the first letters of these five psalms aforesaid, and all those prayers run according to these five. After her five highest joys count in the anthems, and thou shalt find in them five saluta-

tions. The prayers which I have only indicated are written in full, except only the last. Cause to be written on a scroll what ye do not know by heart.

Whatever other devotions you use in private, as Paternosters, Hail Maries, psalms, and prayers, I am quite satisfied that every one should say that which her heart most inclines her to, a verse of her psalter, reading of English or French, holy meditations. As to your kneeling, whenever you have time, before or after meat, the more you do so, the more doth God add and increase towards you his precious grace; and see also, I pray you, that you be never idle, but work, or read, or be at beads, and in prayer, and thus be always doing something from which good may come. The hours of the Holy Ghost, if you wish to say them, say every time of them before our Lady's times; to priest's hours listen as well as you can, but you should neither say the versicles with him nor sing so that he may hear it. Say your graces before and after meat, as they are written out for you, standing, and with the Miserere go before your altar and finish there the graces. Between meals, when any one wishes to drink, let her say benedicite, "May the son of God bless our drink; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen," and

make the sign of the cross; and at last say, "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. The name of the Lord be blessed from this time forth and for ever. Let us bless the Lord. Thanks to God." Always when you go to your bed at night or in the evening, fall on your knees to the earth and think what you have done in the day to displease our Lord, and cry to him earnestly for mercy and forgiveness. If you have done any good, thank him for his grace, without which we can neither do good nor think good, and say "Have mercy on me, O God. Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy on me. Our Father. My God, save thine handmaids who hope in thee." Let us pray: "O God, whose property is ever to have mercy." And say, standing, this prayer, "Visit, we beseech thee, O Lord, this dwelling, and drive far from it all the wiles of the enemy. May thy holy angels dwelling in it keep us in peace, and may thy blessing be upon us for ever, through our Lord," etc. And finally say, "Christ conquers: ✠ Christ reigns ✠ Christ rules ✠" and with three crosses, with the thumb up above the forehead; and then, behold the Lord's cross ✠ Begone, ye adversaries: the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David hath conquered.

Halleluia. A large cross, as at "Make haste, O God, to help me," with "Behold the Lord's cross ✠;" and then four crosses, on four sides, with these four after-clauses, "The cross ✠ drives away every evil. ✠ The cross is the restorer of the world. By the sign of this cross ✠ let every thing malignant fly away; and by the same sign ✠ let every thing that is kind and good be preserved." Finally bless yourself and also your bed, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen." In bed, as far as you can, neither do any thing nor think, but sleep.

They who either cannot, or may not, say the early Matins, may say, instead, thirty Paternosters, and "Hail Mary," after every Paternoster, and "Glory be to the Father," after every "Hail Mary." Finally, whoever can, shall say: "Let us pray: O God, whose property is always to have mercy. Let us bless the Lord. Thanks to God. The souls of the Faithful." For even-song say twenty; for every other time fifteen, in this manner: but at early Matins whoever can, shall say, "O Lord, open thou my lips. Make haste, O God, to help me;" and at all the other times, "Make haste," and at Compline, "Turn us, O God." Whoso is infirm may cut off ten at early Matins; at every other time, five, the half of

each, if her sickness is greater. Whoso is very ill, let her be free from the whole service, and take her sickness not only patiently, but right gladly, and all is hers that holy church readeth or singeth; ye ought, however, to think of God at all times, yet most in your appointed times of devotion, that your thoughts may not then be wandering; and if, through heedlessness, you blunder in words, or mistake a verse, make your venia, falling down to the earth with your hands only, or if the mistake be great, fall quite down, and often avow, in confession, your carelessness about this.

This, now, which I have hitherto spoken, concerning your religious service, is the first part. Whatever may yet remain to be said of those rules, I would that they were as well kept by all, as, through God's grace, they are kept by you.

PART II.—On Keeping the Heart.

1. Of Sight.

"WITH every kind of watchfulness, daughter," saith Solomon the wise, "guard well thy heart, for in it is the life of the soul, if it is well governed." The wardens of the heart are the five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smelling, and every member's feeling, and we shall speak of them all; for, whoever guards these well doth Solomon's command. He keepeth well his heart, and the health of his soul. The heart is a full wild animal, and makes many wild leaps, as St. Gregory saith, nothing escapes from a man's control so soon as his heart; David, God's prophet, said upon a certain occasion, that it had deserted him, "My heart forsakes me;" and afterwards he congratulated himself, and said it was come home. "Lord," saith he, "my heart is come back again: I have found it." When a man so holy, so wise, and

so wary suffered his heart to break loose, others may well be sorely anxious lest it should take flight. And where did it break away from the holy king David, God's prophet? Where? God knows, at the window of his eye: through a sight that he saw: through a beholding, as you shall hereafter hear.

Wherefore, my dear sisters, love your windows as little as possible; and see that they be small,—the parlour's smallest and narrowest. Let the cloth upon them be twofold; black cloth; the cross white, within and without. The black cloth signifieth that ye are black, and of no estimation with the world without; because the true sun, which is Jesus Christ, has discoloured you outwardly, and thus externally, as you are not fair to look on, has he made you through the rays of his grace. The white cross properly belongs to you; for there are three kinds of crosses—red, black, and white. The red appertains to those who are, for the love of God, ensanguined and reddened by the shedding of their blood, as the Martyrs were. The black cross is proper to those who are doing penance in the world for foul sins. The white cross is appropriate to white and unstained maiden purity, which requires much pains well to preserve. Pain is always to be understood by the

cross. Thus the white cross betokeneth the keeping of pure chastity, which requires much pains to guard well. The black cloth also teacheth an emblem, doth less harm to the eyes, is thicker against the wind, more difficult to see through, and keeps its colour better against the wind and other things. See that your parlour windows be always fast on every side, and likewise well shut; and mind your eyes there, lest your heart escape and go out like David's, and your soul fall sick as soon as it is out. I write more particularly for others, for nothing here said applies to you, my dear sisters, for ye have not the name, nay, nor shall ye have, through the grace of God, of staring anchorites, nor of enticing looks and manners, which some, at times, alas! contrary to the nature of their profession, practice; for against nature it is, and a singularly strange prodigy, that the dead should look out, and among living men of the world, consort with sin.

"My dear master," saith some one, quickly enough, "is it, now, so very evil a thing to look out?" Yea, it is, dear sister, for the harm that comes of it is evil above evil to every anchorite, and especially to the young; and to the old, inasmuch as she sets a bad example to the young, and gives them a shield where-

with to defend themselves. For, if any one reprove them, then, they immediately say, "Sir, she does the same who is better than I am, and knows better what she ought to do." O dear young recluse, often does a right skilful smith forge a full weak knife; the wise ought to imitate wisdom and not folly; also, an old recluse may do that well which thou doest ill. But to look out without harm, neither of you can do. And now, observe what evil has come of looking; not one evil or two, but all the evil and all the harm that now is, and that ever yet was, and that ever shall be—all came of a sight. That this is true, lo, here is the proof: Lucifer, because he saw and beheld in himself his own beauty, fell into pride, and of an angel became a foul fiend. And it is written of Eve, the mother of us all, that sin first entered into her through her eyesight, that is, "Eve looked on the forbidden apple, and saw it fair, and began to take delight in beholding it, and set her desire upon it, and took and ate of it, and gave of it to her lord." Lo! how Holy Writ speaks; and how, searching deeply into the cause and origin, it tells how sin began. Thus did sight go before and prepare the way for guilty desire; and death followed, to which all mankind is subject. This apple, dear sisters, betokeneth every thing that

excites guilty desire, and delight in sin. When thou lookest upon a man thou art in Eve's case; thou lookest upon the apple. If any one had said to Eve, when she cast her eyes upon it, Ah, Eve! turn thee away; thou castest thine eyes upon thy death: What would she have answered? "My dear master, thou art in the wrong. Why dost thou find fault with me? The apple which I look upon is forbidden me to eat, and not to look at." Thus would Eve, quickly enough, have answered. O my dear sisters, truly Eve hath many daughters who imitate their mother; who answer in this manner. But, "Thinkest thou," saith one, "that I shall leap upon him, though I look at him?" God knows, dear sisters, that a greater wonder has happened. Eve, thy mother, leaped after her eyes to the apple; from the apple in Paradise down to the earth; from the earth to hell, where she lay in prison four thousand years and more, she and her lord both, and taught all her offspring to leap after her to death without end. The beginning and the root of this woful calamity was a light look. Thus, often, as is said, "of little waxeth mickle." Let, therefore, every feeble man and woman have much dread, when she who was recently created by the hand of God, was, through a look, seduced and

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carried onward to open sin, which overspread the whole world.

A maiden also there was, Jacob's daughter, it is told in Genesis, who went out to see the strange women. Now, observe, it is not said that she beheld men, but it says women. And what, thinkest thou, came of that beholding? She lost her maiden honour, and was made a harlot. Afterwards, for the same cause, were truces broken by high patriarchs, and a great city burned, and the king and his son, and the men of the city slain, and the women of the city led away; her father and her brethren, such noble princes as they were, made outlaws. To this length went her sight: and the Holy Spirit has caused the whole to be written in a book, in order to warn women concerning their foolish eyes. And take notice that this evil which came of Dinah, came not from her seeing Sichem, the son of Hamor, with whom she sinned, but it came from her letting him set his eyes upon her; for that also which he did to her was in the beginning sorely against her will.

Likewise Bathsheba, by unclothing herself in David's sight, caused him to sin with her, though he was so holy a king and God's prophet: and now, a feeble man comes forward and esteems himself highly

if he have a wide hood and a close cope, and would see young anchoresses, and must needs look, as if he were of stone, how their fairness pleases him, who have not their complexion sunburnt, and saith that they may look confidently upon holy men, yea, especially such as he is, because of his wide sleeves. Braggart Sir! hearest thou not that David, God's own beloved servant, of whom God himself saith, "I have found," quoth he, "a man after mine heart;" this king and prophet, chosen out of all the people, concerning whom God himself spoke these precious words, was thus, through casting his eye upon a woman as she was bathing, led into sin, let his heart wander, and forgot himself so far that he committed three heinous and deadly sins: adultery with Bathsheba, the lady upon whom he looked, treachery and manslaughter upon his faithful servant Uriah, her lord; and thou, a wretched sinful man, art so presumptuous as to cast froward eyes upon young women. You, my dear sisters, if any one is desirous to see you, never think favourably of him, but rather believe him the less. I would not that any man should see you except he have special permission from your superior; for all the three sins of which I have just now spoken, and all the evil with regard to Dinah of which I spoke

previously, did not happen because the woman looked frowardly upon men, but it happened through their uncovering themselves in the sight of men, and doing that which made them liable to fall into sin.

For this reason, it was ordained by God in the old law that a pit should be always covered; and if any pit were uncovered, and a beast fell into it, he that uncovered the pit should make it good. This is a very terrible word to a woman who exposes herself to the view of men. She is represented by the person who uncovers the pit. The pit is her fair face, and her white neck, and her light eye, and her hand, if she stretch it forth in his sight And, moreover, her word is a pit, unless it be the better guarded; and all that belongs to her, whatsoever it be, through which sinful love might the sooner be excited, our Lord calleth a pit. He commands that this pit be always provided with a lid and covered, lest any beast fall into it and drown in sin. The beast is any man who, like a beast, thinketh not of God, and doth not use his reason as a man ought to do; but seeketh to fall into this pit that I speak of, if he find it open. But the judgment upon those who uncover the pit is very severe; for they shall make restitution of the value of the beast that is fallen into it. She is guilty

of the beast's death, in our Lord's sight; and shall answer for his soul on Doomsday, and make good the loss of the beast when she hath nothing wherewith to pay but her own self. Hard payment it is withal, and God's judgment and his command is, that she must by all means make restitution, because she uncovered the pit in which it was drowned. Thou dost uncover this pit; thou who doest any thing by which the man is carnally tempted of thee, though thou know it not. Dread greatly this doom; and if he is tempted so that he sin mortally through thee in any way, though it be not with thee, but with desire toward thee, or if he seek to satiate on some other the temptation of thee, which is awakened through thy conduct, be fully certain of the doom. Thou shalt pay the value of the beast for opening the pit; and, unless thou be absolved thereof by confession, as is said, thou shalt bear the rod, that is, bear the burden of his sin. The dog enters gladly where he finds an open door.

St. Austin saith, "An immodest eye is the messenger of an unchaste heart. The light eye speaketh that which the mouth may not for shame, and is as the messenger of the light heart." And here is a woman that would not for any thing desire uncleanness with

man; and yet she never cared, though his thoughts inclined toward her, and he were tempted by her. But Saint Austin putteth both these in one balance—to desire and to wish to be desired. To desire a man, or to wish to be desired of man, both are capital sins. The eyes are the arrows and the first arms of lechery's stings; and, like as men fight with three kinds of weapons, with shooting, with spear's point, and with sword's edge, just so with the same weapons, that is, with eye-shot, with spear of wounding word, with sword of deadly handling, doth lechery, the foul harlot, fight against the lady, Chastity, who is God's spouse. First, she shoots the arrows of the light eyes, that fly lightly forth like a feathered arrow and stick in the heart; then she shaketh her spear, and cometh nigh to her, and with shaking word giveth spear's wounds; sword's dint is downright, that is, the handling, for a sword smites in close fight and giveth a death's stroke; and this truly is done, alas! too close, with them who come so nigh together that the one may handle or any where feel the other. Whoso is wise and good let her be on her guard against the shooting, that is, let her guard well her eyes; for all the evil that ever is comes of the eye arrows. And is not she too forward or too fool-hardy, who

holds her head boldly forth in the open battlements, while men with crossbow-bolts without assail the castle? Surely our foe, the warrior of hell, shoots, as I ween, more bolts at one anchoress than at seventy and seven secular ladies. The battlements of the castle are the windows of their houses. Let her not look out at them, lest she have the devil's bolts between her eyes, before she even thinks of it; for he is always attacking. Let her keep in her eyes, for if she is once blinded, she is easily overcome. Blind the heart, she is easily conquered, and soon brought to the ground by sin.

"As death came," saith Bernard, "into the world through sin, so through eye windows death hath his entrance into the soul." Lord Christ! how men would shut fast every aperture! Wherefore? That they might shut out death—death of carnal life: and will not an anchorite stop up her eye windows against death of hell and of the soul? And with good right may eye windows be called evil windows, for they have done much evil to many an anchorite.

All Holy Writ is full of warning of eye. "Lord," saith David, "turn away mine eyes from the world's delusions and its vain shew." "I have compacted," saith Job, "a covenant with mine eyes, that I may

not think improperly upon a maid." "What," saith he, "do men think with eyes?" "God knows it," saith he, "full well; for after the eye comes the thought, and then the deed." Jeremiah well knew that, who moaned thus, and said, "Alas! mine eye has robbed all my soul." When God's prophet made such moan of eyes, what kind of moan, thinkest thou, has come to many a man, or sorrow to many a woman, of their eyes? The wise man asks, in his book, whether any thing doth more harm to a woman than her eyes? "All the face shall flow with tears," saith he, "for the eye-sight alone." This is now enough said of this sense, at this time, to warn the good. We shall, however, soon hereafter speak of it again.

2. Of Speech.

Speaking and tasting are both in the mouth, as sight is in the eyes; but we shall let tasting alone until we speak of your food, and treat, at present, of speaking, and thereafter of hearing, of both in common, in some measure, as they go together.

First of all, when you have to go to your parlour window, learn from your maid who it is that is come;

for it may be some one whom you ought to shun; and, when you must needs go forth, make the sign of the cross carefully on your mouth, ears, and eyes, and on your breast also, and go forth in the fear of God to a priest. Say first, "Confiteor," and then "Benedicite," which he ought to say; hear his words and sit quite still, that, when he parteth from you, he may not know either good or evil of you, nor know any thing either to praise or to blame in you. Some one is so learned and of such wise speech, that she would have him to know it, who sits and talks to him and gives him word for word, and becomes a preceptor, who should be an anchoress, and teaches him who is come to teach her; and would, by her own account, soon be celebrated and known among the wise.—Known she is well; for, from the very circumstance that she thinketh herself to be reputed wise, he understands that she is a fool; for she hunteth after praise and catches reproach. For, at last, when he is gone away he will say, "This anchoress is a great talker." Eve, in Paradise, held a long conversation with the serpent, and told him all the lesson that God had taught her and Adam concerning the apple; and thus the fiend, by her talk, understood, at once, her weakness, and found out the way to ruin her. Our lady,

Saint Mary, acted in a quite different manner. She told the angel no tale, but asked him briefly that which she wanted to know. Do you, my dear sisters, imitate our lady, and not the cackling Eve. Wherefore, let an anchoress, whatsoever she be, keep silence as much as ever she can and may. Let her not have the hen's nature. When the hen has laid, she must needs cackle. And what does she get by it? Straightway comes the chough and robs her of her eggs and devours all that of which she should have brought forth her live birds. And just so the wicked chough, the devil, beareth away from the cackling anchoresses, and swalloweth up, all the good they have brought forth, and which ought, as birds, to bear them up toward heaven, if it had not been cackled. The poor pedlar makes more noise to cry his soap than a rich mercer all his valuable wares. Of a spiritual man in whom you place confidence, as you may do, it is good that you ask counsel, and that he teach you a safe remedy against temptations; and in confession shew him, if he will hear you, your greatest and vilest sins, that he may pity you, and out of compassion cry internally to Christ to have mercy upon you, and have you often in his mind and in his prayers. "But be aware and on your guard," saith our Lord, "for many come to

you clothed in lambs' fleece, and are raging wolves." Believe secular men little, religious still less. Desire not too much their acquaintance. Eve spoke with the serpent without fear. Our lady was afraid of speaking with Gabriel.

Without a witness, of man or of woman, who may hear you, speak not with any man often or long; and even though it be of confession, in the same house, or where he may look at you, let there be a third person present; except the same third person upon another occasion should fail thee. This is not said in respect of you, dear sisters, nor of any such as you; —no, but because the truth is disbelieved, and the innocent often belied, for want of a witness. Men readily believe the evil, and the wicked gladly utter falsehoods against the good. Some unhappy creature, when she said that she was at confession, has confessed herself strangely: therefore the good ought always to have a witness, for two reasons especially: the one is, that the envious may not calumniate them, so that the witness may not be able to prove the accusers false; the other is, to give an example to others, and to deprive the evil anchoress of that unhappy false pretence which I spoke of.

Hold no conversation with any man out of a church

window, but respect it for the sake of the holy sacrament which ye see therein, and sometimes take your woman to the window of the house; the other men and women to the window of the parlour, to speak when necessary; nor ought ye but at these two windows.

Silence always at meals; for if other religious persons do so, as you well know, ye ought before all; and if any one hath a guest whom she holds dear, she may cause her maid, as in her stead, to entertain her friend with glad cheer; and she shall have leave to open her window once or twice, and make signs to her of gladness at seeing her. The courtesy of some is nevertheless converted into evil to her. Under the semblance of good, sin is often hidden. An anchoress ought to be very different from the mistress of a family. Every Friday of the year keep silence, unless it be a double feast; and then keep it on some other day in the week. In Advent and in the Ember days, Wednesdays and Fridays; in Lent, three days; and all the holy week until noon in Easter eve. To your maid, however, you may say, in few words, what you please, and if any good man is come from a distance, listen to his speech, and answer, in a few words, what he asks.

Very foolish were he, who, when he might choose for his own behoof whether he would grind grit, or wheat, if he ground the grit and left the wheat. "Wheat is holy conversation," as St. Anselm saith. She grinds grit who prates idly. The two cheeks are the two grindstones; the tongue is the clapper. Look, dear sisters, that your cheeks never grind any thing but soul food, nor your ears hear any thing but soul heal; and shut not only your ears but your eye windows against idle conversation; that neither talk nor tidings of this world may come to you.

You must not, upon any account, imprecate evil upon any one; nor take an oath, except ye be able to speak from clear or certain knowledge of the fact, or in some such way; nor are you to preach to any man; nor must any man ask of you, or give you advice or counsel. Consult with women only. St. Paul forbade women to preach, "Mulieres non permitto docere." Rebuke no man, nor reprove him for his fault; but, if he be very forward, holy aged anchoresses may do it in some manner; but it is not a safe thing, and belongeth not to the young. It is their business who are set over the rest and have to take charge of them. An anchoress hath only to take heed to herself and her maidens. Let every one attend

to his own business and not meddle with that which is another's. Many a man thinketh that he doeth that well which he doeth very ill; for, as I said before, sin is oft concealed under the appearance of good; and, by means of such rebukes, an anchorite has raised between her and her priest, either a treacherous love or a great quarrel.

"That is the end of the discourse," saith Seneca the wise,—"I will that you speak seldom, and then but little." But many keep in their words to let more out, as men do water at the mill-dam; and so did Job's friends that were come to comfort him; they sat still full seven nights; but, when they had all begun to speak, they never knew how to stop their importunate tongues. Thus it is in many, as Saint Gregory saith, "Silence is the foster-mother of words, and bringeth forth talk." On the other hand, as he saith, "Long silence and well kept urgeth the thoughts up toward heaven;" just as you may see the water when men dam it and stop it before a spring, so that it cannot flow downward, then is it forced to climb again upward. In this manner must all ye check your words, and restrain your thoughts, as you would wish that they may climb and mount up toward heaven, and not fall downward and flit over the world, as doth empty

talk. But, when you must needs speak a little, raise the floodgates of your mouth as men do at the mill, and let them down quickly.

More slayeth word than sword. "Life and death," saith Solomon, "are in the power of the tongue. He who keepeth well his mouth," saith he, "keepeth his soul." "He who restrains not his words," saith Solomon the wise, "is like a city without walls, into which an army may enter on all sides." Gregory: "He that hath not the wall of silence, lieth open to foes." The fiend of hell goes in with his army through the portal, that is ever open, into the heart. In the Lives of the Fathers, we are told that a holy man said, when men were praising one of the brethren, of whom he had heard that they were men of much speech, "Good," quoth he, "they both are, but their dwelling hath no gate; their mouth is always prating; and whoever will may go in and lead forth their ass;" that is, their unwise soul. "Therefore," saith St. James, "If any man thinketh that he is religious, and bridleth not his tongue, his religion is false; he deceiveth his heart." He saith right well, "bridleth not his tongue;" for a bridle is not only in the mouth of the horse, but part of it is upon his eyes, and part of it on his ears: for it is very necessary that all the

three should be bridled. But the iron is put in the mouth and on the light tongue; for there is most need to hold when the tongue is in talk, and has begun to run. For we often intend, when we begin to speak, to speak little, and well placed words; but the tongue is slippery, for it wadeth in the wet, and slides easily on from few to many words; and then, as Solomon saith, "Much talking, begin it ever so well, cannot be without sin;" for from truth it slides into falsehood, out of good into evil, and from moderation into excess; and from a drop waxeth a great flood, that drowns the soul. For with the flitting word the heart flits away, so that long time thereafter it cannot rightly collect itself again. These are St. Gregory's words, in his dialogue. "As nigh as our mouth is to worldly speech, so far is it from God when we address him and intreat any favour of him. For this reason it is that we often cry to him and he withdraweth himself further from our voice, and will not listen to it, for it savours to him all of the world's babbling, and of its trifling talk." She who wishes God's ear to be nigh her tongue, must retire from the world, else she may cry long ere God hear her. And he saith by Isaiah, "Though ye multiply your prayers to me, ye who play with the world, I will not hear you,

but I will turn away when ye stretch out to me eyes or hands."

Our dear lady, St. Mary, who ought to be an example to all women, was of so little speech that we do not find any where in Holy Writ that she spake more than four times. But, in compensation for her seldom speaking, her words were weighty, and had much force. Her first words that we read of were when she answered the angel Gabriel, and they were so powerful that as soon as she said "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word;" at this word, the Son of God, and very God, became man; and the Lord, whom the whole world could not contain, inclosed himself within the womb of the maiden Mary. Her next words were spoken when she came and saluted Elizabeth, her kinswoman. And what power, thinkest thou, was manifested in those words? What? That a child, which was St. John, began to play in his mother's womb when they were spoken. The third time that she spoke was at the wedding; and there, through her prayer, was water changed into wine. The fourth time was when she had missed her son and afterwards found him. And how great a miracle followed those words! That God Almighty bowed himself to a

man! to a carpenter, and to a woman, and followed them, as subject to them, whither soever they would! Take heed now, and learn diligently from this, how great efficacy there is in speaking seldom.

"A man of many words," saith the Psalmist, "shall never lead a right life on earth." Therefore, he saith in another place, "I will keep my ways by keeping my tongue." Keep I well my tongue, I may well hold on in the way toward heaven. For, as Isaiah saith, "The tillage of righteousness is silence." Silence tilleth her, and she being tilled bringeth forth eternal food for the soul. For she is immortal, as Solomon teacheth, "Righteousness is immortal." Therefore Isaiah joins together hope and silence, and saith that in them spiritual strength shall consist. "In silence and in hope shall be your strength." Observe how well he saith it; for whoso is very quiet and keeps long silence may hope, with confidence, that when she speaks to God he will hear her. She may also hope that, through her silence, she shall also sing sweetly in heaven. This, now, is the reason of the joining: why Isaiah joineth hope and silence, and coupleth both together. Moreover, he saith, in the same passage, that in silence and in hope shall be our strength in God's service against the wiles and temptations of

the devil. And behold with what reason. Hope is a sweet spice within the heart, which spits out all the bitter that the body drinketh. And whoever cheweth spices should shut her mouth, that the sweet breath and the strength thereof may stay within. But she that openeth her mouth, with much talking, and breaketh silence, spits out hope entirely, and the sweetness thereof, with worldly words, and loseth spiritual strength against the fiend. For what maketh us strong to endure hardships in God's service, and in temptations to wrestle stoutly against the assaults of the devil? What, but hope of high reward? Hope keeps the heart sound, whatever the flesh may suffer, or endure; as it is said, "Were there no hope the heart would break." Ah, Jesus, thy mercy! How stands it with those who are in that place where dwells all woe and misery, without hope of deliverance, and yet the heart may not break? Wherefore, as ye would keep hope within you, and the sweet breath of her that giveth strength to the soul—with mouth shut chew her within your heart. Blow her not out with babbling mouth nor with gaping lips. "See," saith St. Jerome, "that ye have neither itching tongue nor ears;" that is to say, that ye neither desire to speak nor to hear worldly talk. Thus far we have spoken

of your silence, and how your speech shall be infrequent. "Of silence and of speech there is but one precept;" and, therefore, in the writing they run both together. We shall now speak somewhat of your hearing, against evil speech; that ye may shut your ears against it, and, if need be, shut your eyes.

3. Of Hearing.

Against all evil speech, my dear sisters, stop your ears, and have a loathing of the mouth that vomiteth out poison. Evil speech is threefold,—poisonous, foul, idle: idle speech is evil; foul speech is worse; poisonous speech is the worst. All that from which no good cometh is idle and needless; "And of such speech," saith our Lord, "shall every word be reckoned and account given," why the one spoke it and the other listened to it. And yet, this is the least of the three evils. What! How, then, shall men give account of the three evils, and especially of the worst? What! How of the worst? that is, of poisonous and of foul speech; not only they who speak it, but they who listen to it. Foul speech is of lechery and of other uncleanness, which unwashen mouths speak at times. Men should stop the mouth of him who spitteth

out such filth in the ears of any recluse, not with sharp words, but with hard fists. Poisonous speech is heresy, and direct falsehood, backbiting, and flattery. These are the worst. Heresy, God be thanked, prevaileth not in England; but lying is so evil a thing that St. Austin saith "That thou shouldest not tell a lie to shield thy father from death." God himself saith that he is truth; and what is more against truth than is lying and falsehood? "The devil," we are told, "is a liar, and the father of lies." She, then, who moveth her tongue in lying, maketh of her tongue a cradle to the devil's child, and rocketh it diligently as nurse. Backbiting and flattery, and instigating to do any evil, are not fit for man to speak; but they are the devil's blast and his own voice. If these ought to be far from all secular men,—what! how ought recluses to hate and shun them, that they may not hear them? Hear them, I say, for she who speaketh with them is no recluse at all. "The serpent," saith Solomon, "stingeth quite silently; and she who speaketh behind another what she would not before is not a whit better." Hearest thou how Solomon eveneth a backbiter to a stinging serpent? Such she certainly is. She is of serpents' kindred, and she who speaketh evil behind another

beareth poison in her tongue. The flatterer blinds a man, and puts a prickle in the eyes of him whom he flattereth. The backbiter often cheweth man's flesh on Friday, and pecketh with his black bill living carcases; as he that is the devil's raven of hell; yet, if he would tear in pieces and pluck with his bill, rotten stinking flesh, as raven's nature is; that is, if he would not speak evil against any but those who are corrupt and stink in the filth of their sins, it were yet the less sin: but he lighteth upon living flesh; teareth and dismembereth it; that is, he slandereth such as are alive in God. He is too greedy a raven, and too bold withal. On the other hand, observe now, of what kind are the two offices in which these two jugglers serve their lord, the devil of hell. It is a foul thing to speak of, but fouler to be it, and it is always so. They are the devil's dirt-men, and wait continually in his privy. The office of the flatterer is to cover and to conceal the hole of the privy; and this he doth as oft as he with his flattery and with his praise concealeth and covereth from man his sin; for nothing stinketh fouler than sin, and he concealeth and covereth it, so that he doth not smell it. The backbiter discloseth and uncovereth it, and so openeth that filth that it stinketh widely. Thus, they are

busy in this foul employment, and strive with each other about it. Such men stink of their stinking trade, and make every place stink that they come to. May our Lord shield you, that the breath of their stinking throat may never come nigh you. Other speech polluteth and defileth ; but this poisoneth the heart and the ears both. That you may know them the better, listen to their marks.

There are three kinds of flatterers. The first are bad enough ; yet the second are worse ; but the third are worst of all. The first, if a man is good, praiseth him in his presence, and, without scruple, maketh him still better than he is ; and, if he saith or doth well, he extolleth it too highly with excessive praise and commendation. The second, if a man is depraved and sins so much in word and deed, that his sin is so open that he may nowise wholly deny it, yet he, the flatterer, in the man's own presence extenuates his guilt. "It is not, now," saith he, "so exceeding bad as it is represented. Thou art not, in this matter, the first, nor wilt thou be the last. Thou hast many fellows. Let it be, my good man. Thou goest not alone. Many do much worse." The third flatterer cometh after, and is the worse, as I said before, for he praiseth the wicked and his evil deeds ; as he who

said to the knight who robbed his poor vassals, "Ah, sir! truly thou doest well. For men ought always to pluck and pillage the churl; for he is like the willow, which sprouteth out the better that it is often cropped." Thus doth the false flatterer blind those who listen to him, as I said before, and covereth their filth so that it may not stink: and that is a great calamity. For, if it stunk, he would be disgusted with it, and so run to confession, and there vomit it out, and shun it thereafter.

Backbiters, who bite other men behind, are of two sorts: but the latter sort is the worse. The former cometh quite openly, and speaketh evil of another, and speweth out his venom, as much as ever comes to his mouth, and throweth out, at once, all that the poisonous heart sends up to the tongue. But the latter proceedeth in a quite different manner, and is a worse enemy than the other; yet, under the cloak of a friend. He casteth down his head, and begins to sigh before he says anything, and makes sad cheer, and moralizes long without coming to the point, that he may be the better believed. But, when it all comes forth, then it is yellow poison. "Alas and alas!" she saith, "wo is me, that he or she hath got such a reputation. Enough did I try, but it availed me nothing, to effect an amendment here. It is long

since I knew of it, but yet it should never have been exposed by me; but now it is so widely published by others that I cannot gainsay it. Evil they call it, and yet it is worse. Grieved and sorry I am that I must say it; but indeed it is so; and that is much sorrow. For many other things, he, or she, is truly to be commended, but not for this, and grieved I am for it. No man can defend them." These are the devil's serpents which Solomon speaketh of. May our Lord, by his grace, keep away your ears from their venomous tongues, and never permit you to smell that foul pit which they uncover, like as the flatterers cover and hide it, as I said before. Let those whom it behoveth uncover it to themselves and hide it from others. That is an essential service, and not to those only who would hate that filth as soon as they should smell it. Now, my dear sisters, keep your ears far from all evil speaking, which is thus threefold, idle, foul, and venomous. People say of anchoresses that almost every one hath an old woman to feed her ears; a prating gossip who tells her all the tales of the land; a magpie that chatters to her of every thing that she sees or hears; so that it is a common saying, "From miln and from market, from smithy and from nunnery, men bring tidings." Christ knows, this is a sad tale;

that a nunnery, which should be the most solitary place of all, should be evened to those very three places in which there is the most idle discourse. But would to God, dear sisters, that all the others were as free as ye are of such folly.

I have now spoken separately of these three members —of eyes, of mouth, and of ears. Concerning ears, all that has now been said is for the behoof of anchoresses; for it is not a becoming thing that an anchoress should bear such a mouth; and it is much to be feared that she lends her ears sometimes to such mouths. We have now discoursed separately of sight, of speech, and of hearing, of each in order. Proceed we now to speak again of them all in common.

Of sight, speech, and hearing in common.

"I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy." "Understand, recluse," he saith, "whose spouse thou art, and how jealous he is of all thy behaviour." In Exodus. "I am," of Himself, "the jealous God." "I am jealous of thee, O Zion, my beloved, with much jealousy." "The ear of jealousy heareth all things" saith the wise Solomon: Know thou right well, his ears are ever inclined to thee,

and he heareth and seeth all that thou doest. His eye ever beholds thee, if thou makest any shew, or castest any loving looks towards vices. "I was jealous for Zion"—"Zion," that is, "Mirror." He calleth thee his mirror; and so entirely his that ye are none other's. Wherefore, he saith in the Canticles, "Shew thy face to me," but to no other. "Look upon me, if thou wilt have clear sight, with the eyes of thy heart. Look within, where I am and seek me not without thy heart. I am a bashful wooer. I will embrace my love nowhere but in a retired place." In such wise our Lord speaketh to his spouse. Let her never wonder, therefore, though he shun her, if she is not much alone; and so alone that she exclude every worldly thing, and every worldly joy from her heart, for it is God's chamber, where disquiet cometh not into the heart, except of something that hath been either seen or heard, tasted or smelled, and felt outwardly. And know thou for a truth, that always the more the senses are dispersed outward, the less she turns her thoughts inward, and the more recluses look outward, they have less love of our Lord inwardly; and it is just the same with the other senses. Observe what St. Gregory saith, "She who guardeth carelessly her outward eyes, by God's

righteous judgment groweth blind in the inward eyes; so that she cannot see God with spiritual sight, nor by such sight know him; for, according as we know his great goodness, and feel his delicious sweetness, we love him more or less." Wherefore, my dear sisters, be outwardly blind, as was the holy Isaac and the good Tobias; and God will give you, as he gave them, inward light to see him and know him; and, through this knowledge, to love him above all things; and then shall you see how the whole world is nothing, and how deceitful is its comfort; and, through that sight, ye shall see all the wiles of the devil; how he cheateth and deceiveth his wretched dupes.

You should look into yourself and see what sins of your own are yet to amend. You should sometimes consider the pain of hell, that you may abhor them, and flee the more resolutely from them. You should look, in spirit, to the blessedness of heaven, in order to kindle in your heart the desire to hasten thither. You should behold, as in a mirror, our Lady with her maidens, and all the army of angels, and all the high heavenly host, and Him above them all who blesseth them all, and is the crown of them all. This sight, dear sisters, shall be of more comfort to you than any worldly sight could be. Holy men who have

experienced it know well that every worldly delight is worthless when compared with it. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna," etc., "and a new name which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." "It is a secret medicine," saith St. John the Evangelist, in the Apocalypse; "it is a secret medicine which no man knoweth that hath not tasted it." This taste, and this knowing, cometh of spiritual sight, and of spiritual hearing, and of spiritual speech, which they ought to possess who forego, for the love of God, worldly hearing, earthly speech, and fleshly sights; and after the sight that now is, which is dim here, ye shall have, there above, the bright sight of God's countenance, of which is all joy in the blessedness of heaven, much more than others. For the righteous God hath so judged that the meed of every one shall correspond to the toil and the trouble that she patiently endureth here for the love of him; and therefore, it is right and proper that anchoresses should have these two special gifts more than others, namely, swiftness and clearness of sight; swiftness, in requital of her being here so confined; clearness of sight, in compensation for her darkening herself here, and being unwilling either to see or to be seen of man. All who are in heaven shall

be as swift as man's thought now is, and as the sunbeam that darts from east to west, and as the eye openeth and shutteth; but an anchoress shut up here shall there be, if any may, both more light and more swift; and shall play in heaven in such wide confines—as it is said that in heaven is large pasture—that the body shall be wheresoever the spirit will, in an instant. Now this is the one special gift, which I said that anchoresses shall have more than others. The other special gift is that of sight. All who are in heaven see all things in God; but anchoresses, for their blindfolding here, shall there see and understand more clearly the hidden mysteries of God and his secret counsels, who care not now to know about things without, either with ears or with eyes.

Wherefore, my dear sisters, if any man requests to see you, ask him what good might come of it; for I see many evils in it, and no good; and if he insists immoderately, believe him the less; and if any one becometh so mad and so unreasonable that he puts forth his hand toward the window cloth, shut the window quickly and leave him; and as soon as any man falls into evil discourse that tends towards impure life, close the window directly and give him no answer at all, but go away with this verse, that he may hear

it, "The wicked have told me foolish tales, but not according to thy law;" and go forth before your altar, with the Miserere. Do not reprove any man of such a character in any way but this, for, with the reproof, he might answer in such a way and blow so gently that a spark might be quickened into a flame. No seduction is so perfidious as that which is in a plaintive strain; as if one spoke thus: "I would rather suffer death, than indulge an impure thought with regard to you; but had I sworn it, I could not help loving you; and yet I am grieved that you know it. But yet forgive me that I have told you of it; and, though I should go mad, thou shalt never after this know how it is with me." And she forgives him, because he speaks thus fair, and then they talk of other matters. But, "the eye is ever toward the sheltering wood, wherein is that I love." The heart is ever upon what was said before; and still, when he is gone, she often revolves such words in her thoughts, when she ought to attend diligently to something else. He afterwards seeketh an opportunity to break his promise, and swears that necessity forces him to do it; and thus the evil grows, the longer the worse; for no enmity is so bad as false friendship. An enemy who seems a friend is of all traitors the most treacherous.

Wherefore, my dear sisters, give no such man any access to you to speak with you; for, as the Holy Scripture saith, "Their word spreads as doth a canker." And instead of any answer, turn your back to him, and go away. Just as I said before, in no other way may you better save yourselves, and beat and conquer him. Observe, now, how rightly the lady in the Canticles, God's beloved spouse, teacheth you by her words how you shall say, "Lo," she saith, "I hear now my beloved speak; he calleth me; I must go:" and go ye, immediately, to your dear and beloved spouse, and make your complaint in his ears who affectionately calls you to him with these words, "Arise, hie thee hitherward, and come to me, my beloved, my dove, my beauteous, my fair spouse." "Let me see thy dear face, and thy lovely countenance. Turn away from others. Let thy voice sound in my ears. Say, who hath offended thee? Who hath hurt thee my dear? Sing in my ears; since thou desirest only to see my countenance, speak only to me. Thy voice is sweet to me, and thy countenance is comely." Whence it is added, "thy voice," etc. These are now two things that are much loved: a sweet voice, and fair countenance: whoso hath both these, such doth Jesus Christ choose to be his beloved

and his bride. If thou wilt be such, let no man see thy countenance, nor blithely hear thy speech; but keep them both for Christ, for thy beloved spouse, as he bade thee before; as thou desirest that thy speech may seem sweet to him, and thy countenance fair, and to have him to be thy beloved who is a thousand times brighter than the sun.

Now, hearken attentively, my dear sisters, to a quite different speech, and contrary to the former. Hearken now how Jesus Christ speaketh as in wrath, and saith, as in angry derision and in scorn, to the anchoress that ought to be his beloved, and yet seeketh outward delights and comforts, with eye or with tongue. In the Canticles, the words are these: "If thou knowest not thyself, thou fair among women, go out and go after the herds of goats, and feed thy kids beside the herdsmen's tents, of boughs and leaves." This is a cruel word, and an angry word withal, which our Lord saith in displeasure and scorn to prying, listening, gossipping, and prating anchoresses. It is wrapped up and concealed, but I will unfold it. "Take good heed, now," saith our Lord, "if thou knowest not thyself; that is, if thou knowest not whose spouse thou art,—queen of heaven, if thou art true to me as a spouse ought to be. If thou hast forgotten this,

and accountest it of little value—go out, and depart," he saith. Whither? "Out of my high place, out of my great honour, and follow the herds of goats," saith he. What are herds of goats? They are the lusts of the flesh, which stink as a goat, in the presence of our Lord. "If thou hast now forgotten thy dignity as a lady,— go and follow those goats, that is, follow the lusts of the flesh. Now, then, come and feed thy kids;" that is, as if he said, "Feed thine eyes with looking about, and thy tongue with prating, thy ears with hearing, thy nose with smelling, thy flesh with soft feeling." Those five senses he calleth kids; for, as from a kid, that hath sweet flesh, cometh a stinking goat, or a buck; just so, from a young, sweet looking, or a sweet hearing, or a soft feeling, waxeth a stinking lust, and a foul sin. Has any peering anchoress ever experienced this, who is always thrusting her beak outward, like an untamed bird in a cage? Has the cat of hell ever clutched at her, and caught with his claws her heart or head? Yes, truly; and drew out afterwards her whole body, with hooks of crooked and keen temptations; and made her to lose both God and man, with open shame and sin. A grievous enough loss! Always to her utter ruin has an anchoress thus peered out.

"Go out," saith he, in anger. "Go out, as did Dinah, Jacob's daughter, to utter ruin;" that is to say, "leave me and my comfort which is within the breast, and go, seek without the world's vile gratifications, which shall end in pain and sorrow. Take to it, and leave me, since thou preferrest it: for thou shalt not by any means have both these two comforts, mine and the world's—the joy of the Holy Ghost, and the gratification of the flesh together. Choose now one of these two; for thou must quit the other." "If thou know not thyself, thou fair among women," saith our Lord,—thou fair among women; nay, among angels, thou might add thereto; thou shalt surely be hereafter fair, not only among women, but among angels. "Thou, my dear spouse," saith our Lord, "shalt thou follow goats a-field, which are the lusts of the flesh?" Field is the wide range of the will. "Shalt thou in this wise follow goats over the field? Thou shouldest, in thy heart's bower, entreat me for kisses, as my beloved one, that saith to me, in the love book, that is, 'kiss me, my beloved, with kiss of thy mouth, sweetest of mouths.'" This kiss, dear sisters, is a sweetness and a delight of heart, so immeasurably delicious and sweet, that every savour in the world is bitter when compared with it: but

our Lord, with his kiss, kisseth no soul that loveth anything but him, and those things, for his sake, that assist us to obtain him: do thou, therefore, God's spouse, who might hear what has been said above, how sweetly thy spouse speaketh, and calleth thee to him so affectionately, and thereafter how he changes the strain, and speaketh most wrathfully, if thou goest out,—keep thee in thy chamber: feed not thou thy goat-kids without; but keep thy hearing, thy speech, and thy sight within; and shut fast their gates—mouth, eyes, and ears. For in vain is she shut up within your wall who openeth those gates, except to God's messenger, and the soul's consolation. Above every thing, then, as Solomon exhorteth thee, and as I said long since, in the beginning of this discourse, my dear sisters, guard well your heart. The heart is well kept, if the mouth, eyes, and ears are wisely kept. For these, as I said before, are the wardens of the heart; and if the wardens go out, the heart is ill-guarded. These are now the three senses which I have spoken of. Speak we now briefly of the other two: Speaking, however, is not a sense of the mouth, as tasting is, though they are both in the mouth.

4. Of Smell.

Smell of nose is the fourth of the five senses. Of this sense Saint Austin saith, "About fragrant smells, I do not concern myself much. If they are present, in God's name, they are welcome; if they are absent, I care not." Our Lord, however, by Isaiah, threateneth with the stench of hell those who take delight here in carnal odours. "On the other hand, they shall smell celestial odours, who, in this life, had stench and rank smells of sweat from iron or from hair-cloth which they wore, or from sweaty garments, or foul air in their houses." But be warned of this, my dear sisters, that sometimes the fiend maketh something to stink that ye ought to use, because he would have you to avoid it: and, at other times, the deceiver maketh a sweet smell to come, as if it were from heaven, from something concealed, that ye cannot see, as from the dust of hidden seeds; in order that ye may think that God, on account of your holy life, sends you his grace and his comfort, and so think well of yourselves, and become proud. The fragrance that cometh from God, comforteth the heart rather than the nostrils. These and other delusions, with which he beguileth many

men, should be rendered ineffective by holy water, and by the sign of the holy rood. Any one who reflected how God himself was annoyed in this sense would patiently bear that annoyance. The hill of Calvary, where our Lord hanged, was the place of execution, where bodies often lay rotting on the ground unburied, and loathsome to the smell. He, as he hanged, might, amidst all his other sufferings, have had their putrescent odour in his nostrils. In like manner he was hurt in all his other senses. In his sight, when he saw the tears of his dear Mother, and of Saint John the Evangelist, and of the other Maries; and when he beheld how all his dear disciples fled from him and left him alone, as a stranger, he himself wept three times with his fair eyes. He quite patiently suffered himself to be blindfolded, that, when his eyes were thus in derision blindfolded, he might give the anchorite a clear sight of heaven. Though thou, for his love, and in remembrance of this, shut thine eyes on the things of the earth, to bear him company, it is no great wonder. Upon one occasion, men with great cruelty hit him on the mouth, when they struck his cheeks and spit upon him in contempt;—and an anchoress is, for a single word, out of her wits! When he bore patiently that the Jews, as they buffeted him,

closed up his dear mouth with their accursed fists,—surely thou, for the love of him, and for thine own great behoof, might close up thy tattling mouth with thy lips. Add to this that he tasted gall on his tongue, to teach anchoresses that they ought never more to grumble on account of either meat or drink, be it ever so stale; if it may be eaten, let her eat, and devoutly thank God for it; and if it may not, let her grieve that she must ask for more palatable food. But rather than that asking should give rise to any offence she ought to die, as a martyr, in her discomfort. Nevertheless, we must avoid death as far as possible without sin. But we should sooner die than commit any sin,—and is it not great sin to cause men to say, "This anchoress is dainty, and she asks much"? And it is still worse if they may say that she is a grumbler, and undisciplined, domineering, and difficult to please. If she were living in the world, she would sometimes have to be content with less and worse. It is very unreasonable to come into a religious house, into God's prison, willingly and freely, to a place of discomfort, to seek therein ease and mastery, and more deference than she might have had, properly enough, in the world. Think, then, O anchoress, of what thou didst intend and seek, when thou didst

forsake the world, at thy entrance into the cloister—to weep for thine own and other men's sins, and renounce all the pleasures of this life, in order to embrace, in the fulness of joy, thy blessed Bridegroom in the eternal life of heaven. He, the heavenly Lord, heard with his ears, all the taunts, and the reproach, and the scorn, and the shame, that ears might hear; and he saith of himself, for our instruction, "I held myself quite still, as one dumb and deaf doth that hath no answer, though men evil intreat and slander him." This is thy Bridegroom's saying; and do thou, happy anchoress, who art his happy bride, learn it earnestly of him, that thou mayst know it, and be able to say it in truth.

I have now spoken of your four senses, and of the comfort wherewith Christ comforteth you through his example when he suffered in his senses, as often as you, in your senses, feel any pain. Now attend while I speak of the fifth, which has most need of comfort: for in it the pain is greatest, that is, in Feeling; and the pleasure also, if it so happen.

5. Of Touch or Feeling.

The fifth sense is in feeling. This one sense is in all the other senses, and throughout the whole body, and therefore needs to be the better guarded. Our Lord knew it well, and therefore he chose to endure most suffering in that sense, to comfort us if we suffer pain therein; and to turn us away from the pleasure which the lusts of the flesh demand; and especially in feeling, more than in the others.

Our Lord in this sense had pain, not in one place only, but in all; not only over all his body, but inwardly, in his blessed soul. In this he had the sting of sorrow and of grievous pain; and grief made him sorely to sigh. This sting was threefold: which, as it were three spears, smote him to the heart. One was the weeping of his mother and the other Maries, who flowed and melted all in tears. Another was that his own beloved disciples no longer believed him, nor held him for God, because he did not help himself in his great suffering, and they all fled from him and deserted him as a stranger. The third sting was the great sorrow and pity that he felt for the lost condition of those who dragged him to death; in that he saw, in regard to them, all his labour lost

that he laboured on earth. These three stings were in his soul. "In his body, in every limb," as Saint Austin saith, "He suffered sundry pains, and died through all his body, as before over all his body he sweated the sweat of death:" "And here," saith Saint Bernard, "he wept not with his eyes only, but with all his limbs." For so full of anguish was that forced sweat that came from his body, in prospect of the excruciating death that he was to suffer, that it seemed like red blood. Moreover, so copiously and so rapidly flowed that bloody sweat from his blessed body that the streams ran down to the ground. "And his sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground." Such horror had he in his human flesh, in contemplation of the severe precious pains which he was to endure. Nor is that a very great wonder; for the more lively the flesh is, the pain and hurt of it is the more and sorer. A little hurt in the eye giveth more pain than a great one in the heel, for the flesh is less quick there. And the flesh of every man is dead flesh compared to what the flesh of God was, as it was taken of the tender maiden; and nothing was ever therein that could deaden it; but it was ever equally alive with the living Godhead that dwelt in it. Wherefore,

the pain in his flesh was greater and sorer than any man ever suffered in his flesh; because his flesh was the most tender and most quick of all flesh. Consider the example which follows:—

A man, for an illness that he hath, is not let blood in the diseased but in the whole side, in order to heal the diseased side. But in the whole world, which was in a fever and in the berebarde, there was not found among all mankind any sound part that might be let blood, but God's body only, who let himself blood on the cross; and not in the arm only, but in five places, that he might heal all mankind of the sickness which the five senses had awakened. Lo! thus the sound and the quick part drew the evil blood out from the unsound, and so healed the sick part. By blood is meant sin in Holy Scripture; the reasons whereof are plainly shewed in what follows. But take notice of this, my dear sisters, that your beloved Bridegroom, who is so worthy of love, the Lord and Saviour of Heaven, Jesus, the son of God, the ruler of the world, when he was thus let blood, think of what sort was his diet that day of the blood-letting! So baleful, and so bitter! and even those for whom he bled brought him no wine, nor ale, nor water; even when he said *Sitio*, and complained of thirst on the cross,

but brought him bitter gall. Where was ever so poor refreshment given to any one when let blood? And yet, he found no fault; but received it meekly, to give a lesson to his people,—and he did yet more for an example to us,—he put his dear mouth to it, and tasted, and took knowledge of it, though he might not use it. Who is there, then, after this, and especially what anchoress is there, who murmurs if she has either meat or drink not to her taste? And be assured that whoever she is that murmurs, she still offereth to our Lord that bitter pittance, as the Jews then did, and is the Jews' accomplice, to offer him in his thirst a drink of sour gall. His thirst is nothing but yearning for the health of our souls; and the murmuring of a bitter and sour heart is to him more sour and bitter now than the gall was then. And thou, his beloved bride, be not the Jews' associate, nor the Jews' partner, to pour out to him such drink, but bear him company, and drink with him cheerfully all that seems to the flesh sour or bitter: that is, pain and hardship, and sorrow, and every discomfort, and he will repay it to thee, as he is a faithful companion, with the health-cup of heaven.

Thus was Jesus Christ, the Almighty God, sorely pained in all his five senses, and particularly in the

last, that is, in feeling. For his flesh was all as quick as the tender eyes; and you guard this sense, that is, bodily feeling, more carefully than all the other senses. God's hands were nailed to the cross. By those nails I entreat you, anchoresses—not you but others, for there is no need, my dear sisters—keep your hands within your windows. For handling or any touching between a man and an anchoress is a thing so unnatural, and so lamentable a deed—so shameful, and such a naked sin, and to all the world so hateful, and so great a scandal, that there is no need to speak or write against it; for, without writing, all the indecency is too apparent. God knows that I would a great deal rather see you all three, my dear sisters, women most dear to me, hang on a gibbet to avoid sin, than see one of you give a single kiss to any man on earth, in the way I mean. I say nothing of the greater impropriety—not only mingling hands, but putting hands outward, except it be for necessity. This is courting God's anger, and inviting his displeasure. To look at her own white hands doth harm to many a recluse that hath them too fair,—as those who are idle. They should scrape up the earth every day, out of the pit in which they must rot. God knows the pit doth much good to many an

anchorite. For, as Solomon saith, "Remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss." She who hath her death always, in a manner, before her eyes, of which the pit reminds her, if she meditate well on the doom of Doomsday, when the angels shall tremble, and of the eternal and dreadful pains of hell, and, above all, on the sufferings of Jesus Christ, how he was pained, as has been said above, in all his five senses, she will not lightly follow the inclinations of the flesh, nor, after the desires of sense, draw upon her any capital sin, with her five senses. Enough has now been said of the five senses, which are, as it were, wardens outwardly of the heart, in which is the life of the soul, as we said above in the beginning, where Solomon said, "Keep your heart with all diligence, etc." Now, thanks be to Christ, are the two parts completed. Let us now proceed, with God's help, to the third.

PART III.—Moral lessons and examples. Reasons for embracing a monastic life.

MY dear sisters, in like manner as you guard well your senses externally, so above all things see that ye be gentle within, and mild and meek, affectionate and kind-hearted, and patient of any word—if any one speaks ill of you—and of any deed, if any one harms you—lest you lose all. Against testy anchoresses, David sayeth this verse, "I am like a pelican that dwelleth alone." The pelican is a lean bird, so peevish and so wrathful that often, in her anger, she killeth her own young ones when they molest her, and then, soon after she is very sorry, and maketh great moan, and smiteth herself with her bill wherewith she slew her young, and draweth blood out of her breast, and with the blood she then quickeneth her slain birds. This pelican is the peevish recluse. Her birds are her good works, which she often slayeth with the bill of sharp wrath; and when she hath so done, she, as the pelican doth, quickly repents, and

with her own bill pecks her breast; that is, with confession of her mouth wherewith she sinned and slew her good works, draweth the blood of sin out of her breast, that is, of the heart in which is the life of the soul, and thus shall then quicken her slain birds, which are her works. Blood betokeneth sin, for as a bleeding man is hideous and frightful in the sight of man, so is the sinful before the eyes of God. Again, no man can judge of blood correctly until it be cold: it is the same with regard to sin. While the heart is inwardly boiling with wrath, there is no just decision, nor any right judgment; or, while the desire is hot toward any sin, thou art not able to judge rightly either of its nature or its consequences; but let the desire pass over and thou wilt rejoice. Let the heart cool, and, as those do who will judge of blood, thou wilt rightly judge the sinful, and the sin to be loathsome and foul which seemed to thee fair; and that so much evil comes of it, that if thou hadst done it while the heat lasted thou wouldest think thyself mad for having intended it. This is true of every sin.

Why blood betokens sin; and particularly of anger.

"Anger, while it lasts, so blindeth the heart that it cannot know the truth." "Anger is a sorceress," as is said in stories; for it bereaveth and depriveth man of his right understanding, and changeth his whole countenance, and transforms him from man into beast's nature. An angry woman is a she-wolf, and an angry man is a wolf, or a lion, or a unicorn. As long as anger is in a woman's heart, though she say her versicles, and her hours, and her paternosters, and her aves, yet she doth nothing but howl. In every thing she is only as one that is changed into a she-wolf in the sight of God; and it is all as the voice of a wolf in his sweet ears. Anger is a kind of madness. Is not an angry man mad? How doth he look? How doth he speak? How fareth his heart within? Of what kind is all his outward demeanour? He regardeth no man. How, then, is he a man? Man is gentle by nature; but as soon as he loseth his gentleness he loseth man's nature, and Anger, the sorceress, transformeth him into the nature of a beast, as I said before. And what if any recluse, Jesus Christ's spouse, is transformed into a she-wolf?

Is it not a great grief? There is, then, nothing to be done but to cast away quickly the rough skin that is about the heart, and with mild conciliation make her smooth and soft, as woman's skin is naturally. For, with the wolf's skin, nothing that she doth is acceptable or pleasing to God.

Here, now, are many sorts of remedies against anger, and many comforts and divers helps. If men speak evil of thee—think that thou art earth. Do not men tear up the earth? Do they not tread upon it? Do they not spit upon the earth? If they did so to thee, they did right to the earth. If thou barkest again, thou art of the nature of a dog. If thou stingest again with venomous words, thou art of serpent's nature, and not the spouse of Christ. Think, did he so? "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and . . . he openeth not his mouth." After all the ignominious pains that he endured in the long night preceding his crucifixion, they led him on the morrow to hang him on the accursed tree; and drove iron nails through his four limbs; "And no more than a sheep," as the Holy Scripture saith, "spake he a word."

Think yet again; What is a word but wind? Too feebly is she strengthened whom a wind's puff of a

word may cast down and throw into sin; and who, then, would not think it strange of an anchoress whom a wind's puff of a word casteth down? And again, doth she not shew that she is dust, and an unstable thing, who, with a little wind of a word, is immediately blown up and provoked. The same puff of his mouth, if thou cast it under thy feet, would bear thee upward toward the blessedness of heaven. And now there is reason to wonder much at our great want of patient endurance. Understand this saying: Saint Andrew could endure that the painful cross lifted him up toward heaven; and lovingly he embraced it. Saint Lawrence also endured that the gridiron lifted him upwards with burning brands. Saint Stephen endured that the stones wherewith they stoned him did the same, and he received them gladly, with bended knees; that is, kneeling; and we cannot endure that the wind of a word should bear us toward heaven, but are mad against them whom we ought to thank, as doing us much service, though it be against their will. All that the base and wicked doth for evil is good to the good, and is all to his behoof and his advancement toward his felicity: let him go on to braid a crown for thee, and that gladly. Think how the good Saint. in the Lives of the Fathers,

kissed and blessed the base hand that had hurt him, and said while he kissed it earnestly, and from his heart: "Ever blessed be his hand, for it hath prepared for me the blessedness of heaven;" and say thou in like manner of the hand that injures thee, and the mouth also that sayeth any evil against thee, "Blessed be thy mouth, for thou makest it an instrument for me wherewith to form and to increase my crown. Well is me for my good, and yet woe is me for thine evil; for thou doest good to me and harm to thyself." Thus shall ye say, my dear sisters, if any man or any woman wrong you by word or deed. But now, it is very strange, if we consider well, how the Saints of God suffered wounds in their bodies; and we are distracted if a wind blow a little toward us, and the same wind hurteth nothing but the ear only. Bernard: "for the wind, that is, the word, can neither wound thee in thy flesh, nor defile thy soul, though it may puff on thee, except thou, thyself, cause it." Thou mightest well understand that there was little of the fire of charity which is kindled by the love of our Lord. There was little of that fire which a puff extinguished. For where there is much fire it naturally increaseth with wind.

Against wrongful word or deed, lo, here is a remedy

and salve for them. Let every one weigh well this example. A man who lay in prison and owed a large sum for his ransom, and in no wise could or might get out, except it were to be hanged, until he had fully paid his ransom,—would he not give good thanks to a man who threw upon him a purse full of money wherewith to pay his debt, and set him free and release him out of painful durance, though he threw it hard against his heart? All the hurt and the sore would be forgotten and forgiven for gladness. Just so are all we here in prison, and owe to God great debts by reason of our sins, and therefore we cry to him in the Paternoster, "Lord, forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." If any wrong is done either by word or deed—that is our ransom, wherewith we should free ourselves and pay our debts to our Lord—which are our sins; for without payment, out of his prison is none taken, but to be punished either in purgatory, or in the pains of hell. And our Lord himself says, "Forgive, and I will forgive you;" as if he had said, "Thou art deeply indebted to me through sins; but if thou wilt make a faithful agreement, I will account whatever any man saith or doth wrongfully against you as part of payment of the debt thou owest me." Now then, though a word strike you

full hard upon the heart, and it seems to you at first that it hurteth thine heart, reflect, as the prisoner would who might be hurt by the purse; and receive it gladly to pay your debt with it; and thank him who sent it to thee, though God may never thank him for his sending it. He doth harm to himself, and good to thee, if thou art able to understand it. For as David well saith, "God placeth in his treasure-house the base and the wicked, in order to hire with them, as men do with money, those who fight well, laying up the depths in store houses;" viz. the cruel, by whom he disciplines his soldiers. Again, the pelican is a bird that hath another nature; which is, that she is always lean. Wherefore, as I said before, David compared himself to her in the character and in the voice of a recluse: "I am like a pelican that dwelleth alone:" and a recluse ought thus to say, and to be like the pelican as to her being lean. "Judith, shut up," as we are told in her book, "led a very hard life, fasted and wore hair-cloth." Judith shut up betokeneth an anchoress shut up, who ought to lead a hard life, as did the lady Judith, as far as she is able, and not like a swine pent up in a sty to fatten and to increase in size for the stroke of the axe.

There are two kinds of anchoresses whom our

Lord speaketh of, and mentions in the Gospel; the false and the true. "Foxes have their holes, and birds of heaven their nests." The foxes, which are the false anchoresses, as the fox is the most false of beasts,—"these," our Lord saith, "have their holes in the earth, with earthly vices, and draw every thing into their holes that they can catch and steal." Thus the anchoresses who gather worldly goods are compared by God in the Gospel to foxes. The fox is also a thievish and ravenous beast, and devours eagerly withal: and the false anchoress draweth into her hole and devours, as the fox doth, both geese and hens; and hath, like the fox, a somewhat simple appearance, and yet is full of guile, and affecteth to be different from what she is, as the fox doth; she is a hypocrite, and thinketh to deceive God, as she imposes upon simple men; and deceiveth most herself. She yelpeth as the fox doth, and boasteth of her merits wheresoever she dare or may, and chattereth of trifling matters, and becometh so extremely worldly, that, as to her name, she stinketh, as the fox doth wherever he goes, for if she doth evil, report makes it worse.

Such persons go into a religious house as Saul went into the cave; not as the pious David did. Both

Saul and David went, indeed, into the cave, as we are told in the Book of Kings. But David went in to cleanse himself, and Saul to befoul the place; as doth, among many men, an unhappy recluse, who goes into a religious house to defile the place, and to indulge therein in carnal uncleanness more secretly than she could do if she were abroad in the world. For who can with more facility commit wickedness than the false recluse? Thus went Saul into the cave to defile the place; but David went in thither only to hide himself from Saul, who hated him and sought to slay him; and so doth the good anchoress. Saul, that is, the fiend, hateth and hunteth after her; and she retires into her cave, to hide herself from his keen clutches. She hides herself in her cave, both from worldly men and worldly sins; and therefore she is spiritually David; that is, strong against the fiend, and her countenance lovely in the sight of our Lord. For this word, David, in the Hebrew language, signifies as much as, strong against the fiend. The false recluse is Saul, according to the meaning of his name; Saul, *abusing*, or *abuse*. For Saul, in Hebrew, is abusing in English; and the false recluse abuseth the name of anchoress. For she unworthily throweth reproach upon the name of anchoress, and

upon all that she doth. But the good anchoress is Judith, as we said before ; that is, shut up as she was ; and doth just as she did, fasteth and watcheth, laboureth and weareth hair-cloth. She is of the nature of the birds, of which our Lord speaketh after the foxes, which dig not downward with their lusts, as do the foxes, which are false anchoresses, but, as birds of heaven which have set up on high their nest ; that is, their rest. True anchoresses are compared to birds ; for they leave the earth ; that is, the love of all earthly things ; and, through yearning of heart after heavenly things, fly upward toward heaven. And, although they fly high, with high and holy life, yet they hold the head low, through meek humility, as a bird flying boweth down its head, and accounteth all her good deeds and good works nothing worth, and saith, as our Lord taught all his followers, "When ye have done all well, say that ye are unprofitable servants." Fly high, and yet hold the head always low. The wings that bear them upwards are, good principles, which they must move unto good works, as a bird, when it would fly, moveth its wings. Also, the true anchoresses, whom we compare to birds,—yet not we, but God—spread their wings and make a cross of themselves, as a bird

doth when it flieth; that is, in the thoughts of the heart, and the mortification of the flesh, they bear the Lord's cross. Those birds fly well that have little flesh, as the pelican hath, and many feathers. The ostrich, having much flesh, maketh a pretence to fly, and flaps his wings, but his feet always draw to the earth. In like manner, the carnal anchoress, who loveth carnal pleasures, and seeketh her ease, the heaviness of her flesh and its desires depriveth her of her power of flying; and though she make a pretence and much noise with her wings; that is, make it appear as if she flew, and were a holy anchoress, whoever looks at her narrowly, laughs her to scorn; for her feet, as doth the ostrich's, which are her lusts, draw her to the earth. Such are not like the meagre pelican, nor do they fly aloft, but are birds of the earth, and make their nests on the ground. But God calleth the good anchoresses birds of heaven, as I said before "Foxes have their holes, and birds of heaven their nests." True anchoresses are indeed birds of heaven, that fly aloft, and sit on the green boughs singing merrily; that is, they meditate enraptured, upon the blessedness of heaven that never fadeth, but is ever green; and sit on this green, singing right merrily; that is, in such meditation they rest in peace and have

gladness of heart, as those who sing. A bird, however, some times, alighteth down on the earth, to seek his food for the need of the flesh; but while he sits on the ground he is never secure, and is often turning himself, and always looking cautiously all around. Even so, the pious recluse, though she fly ever so high, must at times alight down to the earth in respect of her body—and eat, drink, sleep, work, speak, and hear, when it is necessary, of earthly things. But then, as the bird doth, she must look well to herself, and turn her eyes on every side, lest she be deceived, and be caught in some of the devil's snares, or hurt in any way, while she sits so low. "The birds," saith our Lord, "have nests." A nest is hard on the outside with pricking thorns, and is delicate and soft within: even so shall a recluse endure hard and pricking pains in the flesh; yet so prudently shall she subdue the flesh by labour, that she may say with the Psalmist: "I will keep my strength, O Lord, to thy behoof;" and therefore the pains of the flesh are proportioned to every one's case. The nest shall be hard without and soft within; and the heart sweet. They who are of a bitter or hard heart, and indulgent towards their flesh, make their nest, on the contrary, soft without and thorny within. These are the discon-

tented and fastidious anchoresses; bitter within, when they ought to be sweet; and delicate without, when they ought to be hard. These, in such a nest, may have hard rest, when they consider well. For, from such a nest, they will too late bring forth young birds, which are good works, that they may fly toward heaven. Job calleth a religious house a nest; and saith, as if he were a recluse: "I shall die in my nest, and be as dead therein;" for this relates to anchorites; and, to dwell therein until she die; that is, I will never cease, while my soul is in my body, to endure things hard outwardly, as the nest is, and to be soft within.

From dumb beasts and birds learn wisdom and knowledge. The eagle deposits in his nest a precious stone which is called agate. For no poisonous thing may come nigh the stone, nor harm his birds while it is in his nest. This precious stone is Jesus Christ; a faithful stone, and full of all might, above all precious stones. He is the agate which the poison of sin never approached. Place him in thy nest; that is, in thine heart. Think what pains he suffered in his flesh without, and how gentle and mild he was in his heart within; and thus shalt thou drive all poison out of thy heart, and bitterness out of thy body. For in

such meditations, however bitter may be the pain thou sufferest for the love of him who endured more for thee, it shall seem sweet to thee. This stone, as I have already said, driveth away poisonous things. If thou have this stone within thine heart, which is God's nest, thou needest not fear the venomous serpent of hell. Thy young birds, which are thy good deeds, are quite secure from his venom.

Whosoever cannot have this stone, nor can keep it, in any manner or way, in the nest of her heart, must see that she have, at least, its likeness; that is, the crucifix, in the nest of her monastery, and contemplate it often, and kiss the places of the wounds, in sweet remembrance of the real wounds which he meekly suffered on the real cross. Yea, for thus she may be Judith; that is, lead an austere life, and often make acknowledgment to God of his great goodness toward her, and her deficiences toward him, in that she returned him evil; and cry earnestly for mercy and forgiveness thereof, and confess frequently. Then is she Judith, who slew Holofernes. For Judith in Hebrew is confession in English. Wherefore, every anchoress saith to every priest, "Confiteor," first of all, and confesseth herself first of all, and often, that she may be Judith and slay Holofernes; that is, the

devil's strength. For this word Holofernes signifieth as much as stinking in hell. In the Hebrew language, Holofernes is the fiend, who maketh a fat and frolicsome calf feeble and weak. A fat and frolicsome calf is the flesh, which groweth wild as soon as it becometh fat through abundance and ease. "My beloved is grown fat," saith our Lord, "and smote me with his heel." For as soon as the flesh hath all its will, it immediately kicketh, like a fat and idle calf. This fat calf the fiend hath power to deprive of strength, and to incline toward sin: for so much saith this name Holofernes. But the anchoress shall be Judith by an austere life and true confession, and shall slay, as did Judith, the wicked Holofernes, and tame right well her flesh, as soon as she feeleth that it is growing too wild, with fasting, with watching, with hair-cloth, with hard toil, and severe discipline, wisely, however, and cautiously: "In every sacrifice," saith our Lord, "thou shalt offer me always salt." Fasting, watching, and other things of that kind, such as I have just named, are my sacrifices. Salt betokeneth wisdom: for salt giveth meat soundness, and wisdom giveth savour. All our works, and all that we do without salt, that is, wisdom, seemeth to God tasteless. On the other hand, without salt flesh gathereth

worms, and stinketh foully, and soon becomes putrid. So, without wisdom, the flesh, like a worm, gnaws and destroys itself, and perisheth as a thing which becometh putrid, and, at last, slayeth herself. But such a sacrifice smelleth offensively to our Lord. Though the flesh be our foe, we are yet commanded to sustain it. We must, however, afflict it, as it often well deserves; but not withal to destroy it; for, how weak soever it be, still it is so coupled, and so firmly united, to our precious soul, God's own image, that we might soon kill the one with the other. And this is one of the greatest wonders on earth, that the highest thing under God, which is the soul of man, as St. Austin testifieth, should be so firmly joined to the flesh, which is only mud and dirty earth; and, through that joining, love it so dearly, that, to gratify it, in its base nature, the soul recedes from its sublime and heavenly nature; and, to please the flesh, displeaseth its Creator, who made it after his own likeness, who is King and Ruler of heaven and earth. This is a wonder above all wonders, and a wonder that excites contempt,—that a thing so utterly mean, almost nothing, as St. Austin saith, should seduce into sin a thing so very noble as the soul is; which St. Austin calleth nearly the highest thing, God alone excepted.

But God was unwilling that it should leap up into pride, or should desire to climb, and fall as did Lucifer—for he was without any burden—and therefore he tied a clod of heavy earth to the soul, as men tie a cubbel to the swine that is too much given to rake and range about. And that is what Job said, "Lord, thou hast made a too heavy weight to give wings to the soul;" that is, the heavy flesh which draweth it downward; but through the nobleness of the soul the flesh shall become full light, yea, lighter than the wind, and brighter than the sun, if it follow the soul here, and draw her not too strongly into its own base nature. Dear sisters, for the love of him whom the soul resembles, honour her, and suffer not the base flesh to get too much dominion over her; for she is here in a strange land, pent in a prison and shut up as in a dungeon, nor is it easily seen of what dignity she is, nor how noble is her nature, nor how great she shall be in her own kingdom. The flesh is here at home, as earth, upon earth; and therefore, it is brisk and bold, as it is said, "The cock is brave on his own dunghill." Alas! it hath too much power over many. But an anchoress, as I have said, ought to be all spiritual, if she wishes to fly well, as a bird that hath little flesh and many feathers. Not only this, but

she also tameth well her undisciplined flesh, and strengtheneth and doth honour to her precious soul. Moreover, she must also, by her example and her devout prayers, give strength to others, and support them, that they fall not into the filth of sin. And therefore David, immediately after he had compared an anchoress to the pelican, compared her to the night bird that is under the eaves.

"I am become like a pelican in the wilderness; and like a night-raven that is upon the house-top." The night fowl in the eaves betokeneth recluses who dwell under the eaves of the church, that they may understand that they ought to be of so holy life that the whole holy church, that is, all Christian people, may lean and be supported upon them, and that they may bear her up with their holiness of life and their pious prayers. And an anchoress is for this reason called anchoress, and anchored under the church as an anchor under a ship, to hold the ship so that neither waves nor storms may overwhelm it. In like manner shall anchoresses, or the anchor, hold the Holy Church Universal, which is called a ship, so firm, that the devil's storms, which are temptations, may not overwhelm it. Every recluse is bound to this by covenant, both by reason of her name of anchoress, and because

she dwelleth under the church, as if to underprop it, lest it should fall. If she breaketh covenant, let her consider to whom she is false, and how, continually; for she giveth no support to the anchoress's abode; and her name continually proclaims this covenant, even when she sleepeth.

Again, the night fowl flieth by night, and seeks his food in the darkness; and thus shall the recluse fly with contemplation, that is, with high and with holy prayers, by night toward heaven, and seek during the night nourishment for her soul. In the night, the anchoress ought to be watchful and diligent about spiritual attainments; wherefore, there cometh immediately after, "I have watched, and am even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the house-top." I was watchful, saith David, in the character of an anchorite, and like a lonely sparrow under a roof. I was watchful: for this is the duty of an anchoress—to watch much. Ecclesiasticus: "Watching for riches consumeth the flesh." Nothing subdueth wild flesh nor maketh it more tame than much watching; for watchfulness is much praised in many places of Holy Scripture. "Therefore, as ye would not fall into temptation," saith our Lord, "watch and pray, and that shall enable you to stand." He saith afterwards,

"Blessed is he whom our Lord, when he cometh, findeth watching." And he himself passed the whole night in prayer: and thus he taught us watchfulness, not only by his doctrine but by his actions.

Eight things especially admonish and invite us to be watchful and diligent in some good work—the shortness of this life—the difficulty of our way—the small amount of our merits—the great number of our sins—the certainty of death, and the uncertainty of the time—the severe doom of the day of judgment, which is also so strict. Our Lord saith in the gospel: "Of every idle word," etc., and again, "There shall not an hair of your head perish;" that is, no thought shall be unpunished. These are God's words: that every idle word shall be there brought forth, and idle thoughts that were not previously amended. Consider now what cometh of depraved affections and sinful works. Again, the seventh thing which warns us to be vigilant is the pains of hell, in which consider three things—the innumerable torments which no tongue may tell—the eternity of each, which lasteth without end—and their vast bitterness. The eighth thing is the greatness of the reward in the blessedness of heaven, world without end. Whoso watcheth well here a little while—

whoso hath these eight things in her heart, will shake off her sleep of vicious sloth in the still night, when nothing is to be seen to hinder prayer. The heart is often at such a season so sincere; for there is then no witness of any good that we do but God only, and his angel, who is busily employed in inciting us to good. For then, nothing is lost, as there often is in the day.

Hear now, my dear sisters, how evil it is to be vain and boast of good deeds, and how good it is to conceal our good works, and to fly by night, like the night fowl, and to gather in the darkness, that is, privately and secretly, food for the soul.

"Esther the queen's prayer was agreeable and pleasing to king Ahasuerus." "Esther" in Hebrew, is "hid" in English; and giveth us to understand that prayer and other good actions done in secret, are pleasing to Ahasuerus, that is, to the King of Heaven; for Ahasuerus in Hebrew, is blessed in English; which is our Lord, who is blessed over all. David speaketh to an anchoress that was wont to do good in secret, and afterwards, in some wise, was vain of it and made it known: "Wherefore turnest thou thy face aside and why drawest thou thy right hand out of the midst of thy bosom? 'in finem,'" that is, finally. The right

hand is good works ; and the bosom is privacy, which is as if he said, The right hand which thou, O anchoress, held in thy bosom, that is, thy good work that thou hadst done privately, as a thing is secret in the bosom ; why drawest thou it out ? " in finem," finally, that is, that thy reward should terminate so soon. The reward that might be endless, if thy good deed were concealed ; why dost thou discover it, and acceptest so small a reward ?—a reward that is gone in an instant ! " Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward." Thou hast made known thy merit, saith our Lord, verily thou hast received thy reward. Saint Gregory is amazed, and saith that men are mad who judge so ill. It is great madness, saith he, to do well, and to desire praise on that account : to do that whereby men buy the kingdom of heaven, and sell it for a vain puff of the world's applause—the praise of men. Wherefore, my dear sisters, keep your right hand within your bosom, lest the endless reward be quickly ended. We read in Holy Scripture that the hand of Moses, God's prophet, as soon as he had drawn it out of his bosom, seemed to have the hospital malady, and appeared leprous. Thereby it is shewn that a good action dragged before the world is not only lost through that vanity, but

appeareth even loathsome in the sight of God, as the leprosy is loathsome in the sight of men. Lo, this is a marvellously good saying which the holy Job said, "In my bosom is all my hope contained." As if he had said, Whatsoever good I do, if it were boasted of and drawn forth out of my bosom, all my hope were gone from me; but, because I held it and hid it, as it were, in my bosom, I hope for reward. Wherefore, if any of you do any good, let her not draw it outward, nor let her make any boast of it; for, with a little puff—with a boastful word, it may be all wafted away.

Our Lord, in Joel, complaineth grievously of those who lose and destroy, through desire of praise, all the good they have done; and saith these words: "Alas! they who shew their good deeds have peeled my fig tree; rent off all the bark; stripped it stark naked, and cast it away; and the green boughs are all withered, and become dry white staves." This passage is obscure: but take good heed to what I am going to say to clear it up to you. A fig tree is a kind of tree that beareth sweet fruit, which are called figs. Then is the fig tree peeled, and the bark rent off, when a good deed is boasted of. Then is the life gone out. Then is the tree dead. When the bark is gone, it neither beareth fruit, nor doth it again

put forth green and lovely leaves; but its boughs are dried, and become white staves; fit for nothing better than to be used as fuel. When the bough is dead, it whiteneth externally, and drieth within, and casteth off its bark. Even so a good deed that is about to perish casteth off its bark; that is, uncovereth itself: the bark which conceals it, which is the defence of the tree, preserves it in strength and vigour. Just so, the concealing it is the life of the good deed, and keeps it in strength. But when this bark is off, then, as the bough doth, it whiteneth without, through worldly praise, and drieth up within, and loseth the sweetness of God's grace, which maketh it green and lovely—pleasant to behold. For green, above all colours, is most agreeable to the eyes. When it is so dried, then it is for nothing so fit as for the fire of hell. For the first peeling, from which all this evil came, is from nothing but pride. And is it not a great pity that the fig tree, which, with its sweet fruit, that is, its good deeds, should spiritually feed God, the Lord of Heaven, should dry up without bark, on account of its being uncovered, and become without end food for hell fire? And is not she unhappy that with the price of heaven buyeth to herself hell? Our Lord himself, in the gospel, compareth

the kingdom of heaven to a treasure, which, whosoever hath found, as he saith, hideth. Treasure is a good deed, which is compared to heaven, for men buy it therewith; and this treasure, if it be not the better hid and concealed, is soon lost. For, as Saint Gregory saith, He who carrieth a treasure openly in a way that is all full of thieves and robbers and plunderers, desireth to lose it and to be robbed. This world is only a way to heaven or to hell; and is all beset with skulking thieves of hell, who rob all the treasures that they can discover, which man or woman open in this way. For it is just the same as if he said and called aloud as he went, "I am carrying a treasure, I am carrying a treasure: Look, here it is; red gold and white silver enough, and precious jewels." A poor pedlar, who carrieth nothing but soap and needles, shouteth and calleth out loud and clamorously what he beareth; and a rich mercer goeth along quite silently. Inquire what happened to the good King Hezekiah, because he shewed the store-house of his spices, and his great treasure, and his precious things. It is not without design written in the Holy Gospel, concerning the three kings who came to offer to Jesus Christ the three precious gifts: "They fell down and worshipped him; and when they had opened their

treasures," etc. That which they wished to offer him they kept always concealed until they came into his presence. Then first, they uncovered the present which they bore. Wherefore, my dear sisters, in the night time, as the night bird is compared to an anchorite, be diligently stirring. Night I call privacy. This night ye may have at all times of the day ; so that all the good that you do be done as it were by night and in darkness, out of the sight and hearing of men. Thus, in the night, be on the wing, and seeking heavenly food for your souls. Then you will be not only the pelican in the wilderness, but also the night raven under the eaves.

" I have watched and am even as it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the house-top." Again, the anchoress is compared here to a sparrow, that is alone, under roof, as an anchoress. The sparrow is a chattering bird ; it is always chattering and chirping. And, because many an anchoress hath the same fault, David compareth her not to a sparrow that hath a mate, but to a solitary sparrow. " As it were a sparrow, that sitteth alone upon the house-top." " I am," he speaks as an anchoress, " like a sparrow that is all alone." For thus ought the anchoress, by herself alone in a lonely place, as she is, to be always chirping

and chattering her prayers. And, kindly understand, my dear sisters, that I write of solitary life to comfort anchoresses, and yourselves more especially.

How good a thing it is to be alone, is manifested and shewn both in the Old Testament and also in the New. For in both we find that God revealed his secret counsels and his heavenly mysteries to his dear friends, not in the presence of a multitude, but when they were by themselves alone. And they, themselves also, as often as they would meditate solely on God, and pray to him sincerely, and be spiritually elevated in heart toward heaven—it is always found that they fled from the strife of men, and went apart by themselves, and that God visited them and granted their requests. Because I said that we find this both in the Old Testament and also in the New, I will, out of both, shew an example and proof.

Isaac the patriarch, that he might meditate deeply, sought a lonely place, and went apart by himself alone, as is believed to have been his wont, as we are told in Genesis, and thus he met the pious Rebecca, that is, God's grace. Rebecca is, by interpretation, "he gave much."

> From heavenly grace alone man's goodness flows;
> God crowns alone the merit he bestows.

Likewise the pious Jacob, when our Lord revealed his dear countenance to him, and gave him his blessing, and called him by a better name, had fled from men, and was alone: never in the crowd of men gat he such gain. From Moses, and from Elias, God's dear friends, it is clear and manifest what great turmoil, and how dangerous it is to live always among a multitude; and how God reveals his secret counsels to those who are in privacy and solitude. Those histories, dear sisters, shall be told you, for it would be tedious to write them here, and then ye shall understand all this clearly.

It is said that the pious Jeremiah sits in solitude, and the reason why is also told: "The Lord had filled him with his threats." God's threats are misery and woe in body and in soul, world without end! Whosoever were well filled, as he was, with this threatening, would have no vacant place in his heart in which to receive carnal mirth; and therefore, he prayed for a well of tears to his eyes, that they might never dry up any more than a well: "Who will give me a fountain of tears to my eyes, that I may weep for the slain of my people?" To weep for slain people—that is, almost all the world, which is spiritually slain with mortal sins. And observe now how the holy prophet prays for a solitary place to weep in. "Who

will give me in the wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men ? "—to shew distinctly, that whoso would weep for her own and other men's sins, as an anchoress ought to do—whoso would find with the strict judge mercy and grace—there is one thing which hinders her most, which is, living and being noted among men ; and that which most greatly forwards and assists it, is solitude—that either man or woman be alone. Jeremiah speaketh yet again of solitary life : " He shall sit solitary," saith he, " and be silent." Of this silence he speaketh a little before : "It is good to wait in silence for God's grace, and that a man bear God's yoke early from his youth : " and then followeth : " She that would do well shall sit solitary, and hold her peace ; " that is, by a life of elevated piety, exalt herself toward heaven above her kind. Moreover, the other good that cometh of this solitary sitting, which Jeremiah speaketh of, and of devout silence, immediately followeth: "She," saith he, "who would be so exalted, will offer her cheeks to the smiter, and shall be filled with reproachful words." Here are, in these words, two excellent moral qualities to be carefully observed, which rightly belong to anchoresses. Patience in the former part ; and in the latter part, meekness—of mild and meek heart.

For he is patient who beareth patiently an injury that is done him ; and he is meek who can bear to be evil spoken of. Those whom I have hitherto mentioned were under the old law : come we now to the new.

Saint John the Baptist, of whom our Lord saith, that among the sons of women there never arose a better, taught us openly by his own actions that solitude is both safe and profitable. For, though the angel Gabriel had foretold his birth, and although he was filled with the Holy Ghost even within his mother's womb ; and was, by miracle, born of one barren, and at his birth unbound his father's tongue to prophesy ; yet, for all this, he durst not dwell among men. Life appeared to him so dangerous among them ; even if it were on account of nothing less but of speech alone. And what then did he ? Young as he was, he fled away into the wilderness, lest he should defile his pure life with speech. For so it is in his hymn: "To the caves of the desert in tender years." He had heard, as it seems, Isaiah, who moaned and said, "Women, woe is me ! for I am a man of unclean lips ;" and he saith the reason why : "And that is, because I dwell among men who have sullied their lips with indiscreet speeches." Lo ! how God's prophet saith that he was sullied by living among men.

It is so indeed. For neither gold, nor silver, nor iron, nor steel, is ever so bright that it will not draw rust from a thing that is rusty, if they lay long together. Wherefore Saint John fled from the society of foul men, lest he should be sullied. And further, to shew us that we cannot flee from the bad, without fleeing from the good, he fled from his holy kindred, chosen of our Lord, and went into a solitary place and dwelt in the wilderness. And what did he gain there? He gained that he was God's baptist, the high honour that he held in baptism, under his hands, the Lord of Heaven, who upholds the whole world with his might alone; when the Holy Trinity was fully revealed to him, the Father by his voice, the Holy Ghost in the likeness of a dove, the Son in his hands. In solitude he acquired these three possessions—the privilege of preacher, the merit of martyrdom, and the reward of virginity. These three kinds of men have in heaven a superabundant reward, crown upon crown; and the blessed John, when he was in solitude, earned for himself alone these three dignities.

Our dear lady, did not she lead a solitary life? She was no where abroad, but was shut up fast, for so we find. "The angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee."

That is, the angel went in to her; she was within then, in solitude, all alone. An angel has seldom appeared to man in a crowd. On the other hand, since it is not any where recorded in Holy Scripture that she spoke, except four times, it is a clear proof that she, who thus kept silence, was much alone. What more do we require? One good example may suffice for all. He went himself alone into a solitary place, and fasted when He was alone in the wilderness; to shew thereby that no one can exercise true penitence amidst the multitude. There, in solitude, it is said that he hungred, to comfort anchorites who are in want. There he suffered the fiend to tempt him many ways; but he overcame him. Also to shew that the fiend tempteth much those who lead a solitary life, for envy that he beareth towards them: but he is there always overcome. For our Lord himself standeth by them in the fight, and emboldeneth them to resist strongly, and giveth them of his strength. The Saviour himself, as Holy Scripture saith, whom no mirth, or noise, or multitude of people might hinder him from his prayers, nor disturb him in his holy meditations,—yet, nevertheless, when he wished to be much in prayer, he fled not only other men, but even his holy disciples, and went up into the hills alone:

for an example to us, that we should retire by ourselves and mount up with him upon hills; that is, to meditate on heavenly things, and leave low beneath us all earthly thoughts, while we are engaged in prayer. Paul and Antony, Hilarion, Benedict, Syncletica, Sara, and many other such pious men and women both truly experienced and rightly perceived that what was gained by a solitary life was pleasing to God; as persons who obtained from God whatsoever they wished. Saint Jerome likewise saith of himself, "As often as I have been among men, I came from them less man than I was before." Wherefore saith Ecclesiasticus, "Never take pleasure among a multitude of people: for sin is ever there." Did not the voice from heaven say to Arsenius, "Arsenius, flee from men, and thou shalt be saved." And again he came to him and said, "Arsenius, flee and be quiet, and dwell constantly in one place out of the sight of men."

Now, ye have heard, my dear sisters, an example out of the Old Testament, and also out of the New, shewing why ye ought to love greatly a solitary life; and now, after these examples, hear the reasons why one ought to flee the world: eight reasons at the least. I mention them briefly: take the more heed.

I. The first is security. If a raging lion were

running along the street, would not a wise person soon shut herself in? And Saint Peter saith that the lion of hell rangeth and raketh always about, seeking an entrance to devour the soul; and he commands us to be watchful and busied in holy prayers, lest he catch us. This is St. Peter's advice, as I said before. Therefore be ye wise anchoresses, who have shut themselves up carefully, against the lion of hell, in order to be the more secure.

II. The second reason is that she who bears a precious liquor or a precious drink, such as balsam, in a frail vessel—healewi in a brittle glass—would not she go out of the way of a crowd, unless she were a fool? This brittle vessel is woman's flesh. Of this brittle vessel the Apostle saith: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels." The balsam, the healewi, is virginity, which is therein; or, after the loss of maiden honour, chaste purity. This brittle vessel is more brittle than any glass; for, be it once broken, it is never mended, nor whole as it was before, any more than glass. Moreover, it breaketh more easily than brittle glass doth. For glass breaketh not unless something strike against it. But with regard to the loss of virginity, its purity may be lost by an unchaste wish. So far may it go and last so long: but this

kind of breach may be afterward repaired, and made quite as whole as ever it was by the remedy of confession and by repentance. Now for the proof of this: Had not St. John the Evangelist brought home a bride? Had he not thought, if God had not prevented him, to relinquish maidenhood? Yet, afterwards, he was a maiden not the less pure; and himself a maiden, a maiden was given in charge to him to keep. Now, as I say, this precious balsam in this brittle vessel is virginity and purity in our brittle flesh, more brittle than any glass; which, if ye were in the world's crowd, ye might, from a slight collision, lose entirely, like the unhappy people in the world who jostle against each other and break their vessels and shed their purity. And, therefore, our Lord thus addresses us: "Leave the world and come to me; for there ye shall be in the crowd; but rest and peace are with me."

III. The third reason for fleeing from the world is the obtaining of heaven. Heaven is exceedingly high; and it is little enough that she who wishes to gain it and arrive at it should cast all the world under her feet. Wherefore, all the saints made all the world, as it were, a footstool to their feet in order to reach up to heaven. This is the saying of St. John the

Evangelist, in the Apocalypse: "I saw," saith he, "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." The moon waxeth and waneth, and is never steadfast; and is, therefore, a fit emblem of worldly things, which are, like the moon, ever changing. This moon the woman must hold under her feet; she must trample upon and despise worldly things, who wishes to arrive at heaven, and be clothed there with the true sun.

IV. The fourth reason is, that it is a proof of nobleness and liberality. Noblemen and gentlemen do not carry packs, nor go about trussed with bundles, nor with purses. It belongs to beggars to bear bag on back, and to burgesses to bear purses, and not to God's spouse, who is the lady of heaven. Bundles, purses, bags, and packs are all earthly wealth and worldly revenues.

V. The fifth reason is, that noble men and women give large alms. But who may give larger alms than others? They who say with St. Peter, "Lord, to follow thee, we have left all things." Is not this large alms? Is not this leaving much? My dear sisters, kings and emperors have their nourishment out of your large alms, which ye have left. "Lord, to follow thee," saith St. Peter, "we have left all:" as if he

had said, We will follow thee in the great nobleness of thy liberality. Thou didst leave to other men all riches, and gavest alms of all, and has left so large remains—we will follow thee; we will do the same—leave all as thou didst, and follow thee also on earth, both in this and in other things, that we may follow thee likewise into the blessedness of heaven, and there still follow thee every where whithersoever thou goest, as none may but the pure only. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth," that is, with both feet—in purity of heart and of body.

VI. The sixth reason why ye have fled from the world is fellowship; that is, to be in fellowship with our Lord. For thus he saith by Hosea: I will lead thee, saith our Lord to his beloved, into a solitary place, and there I will speak affectionately to thine heart; for I dislike a crowd. "I am the Lord; and I will not enter into the city."

VII. The seventh reason is, that ye may be the brighter, and may behold more clearly God's bright countenance in heaven; because ye have fled from the world, and hide yourselves here for his sake. Yet more, there ye shall be swift as the sunbeam; because ye are shut up with Jesus Christ as in a sepulchre, and

imprisoned, as he was, on the precious cross, as was said above.

VIII. The eighth reason is, that your prayers may be fervent. And now consider attentively why the meek Queen Esther—who betokeneth anchoress, for her name signifieth as much as hidden in English speech—as we read in her book, was more pleasing than all others to King Ahasuerus; and through her prayer he freed from death all her people, who were doomed to death. Ahasuerus is interpreted "blessed," as is said before, and betokeneth God, blessed above all. He granted to Esther the queen, that is, the true anchoress, the right Esther, who is really hidden—he heareth her and granteth all her petitions, and sheweth thereby that much and many people would have been lost who are saved through the prayers of anchoresses, as they were through Esther's, when they are like Esther, and conduct themselves as Esther the daughter of Mordecai did. Mordecai signifieth "bitterly trampling upon the shameless." Shameless is the man or the woman that doth or saith any thing indecent before an anchoress. If, however, any one do so, and she interrupt bitterly his improper speech, or his foolish deeds, let her trample upon them, I say, at once, with contempt. Then is she Esther, Mor-

decai's daughter, bitterly trampling upon the shameless. More bitterly, nor better, she cannot interrupt than is said above, with the words "The wicked have told me foolish tales," etc., or with this verse, "Depart from me, ye malignant, and I will search the commandments of my God;" and let her go inward immediately toward her altar, and keep at home, as did Esther the hidden. Shimei, as we are told in the Book of Kings, had deserved death: but he implored mercy, and Solomon forgave him, yet upon the condition that he should keep at home in Jerusalem where he dwelt, and hide himself in his house; and if he went forth any whither, such was the covenant, that he should then be again guilty, and condemned to death. He unfortunately, however, brake the covenant; for his bond-servants ran away and escaped from him, and he pursued them and went out after them. What wouldest thou more? He was soon betrayed to King Solomon, and because the covenant was broken, he was doomed to death. Understand this well, my dear sisters: Shimei betokeneth the outward anchoress; not Esther the hidden. For Shimei signifieth "hearing" in our language; and it means the anchoress who hath ass's ears, long, to hear from afar; that is, asking after

tidings. Shimei was in Jerusalem, upon condition of hiding himself therein, if he wished to live. This word, Jerusalem, signifieth "sight of peace," and betokeneth a monastery; because nothing ought to be seen therein but peace only. Never let Shimei, that is, the recluse, so greatly offend the true Solomon, that is, our Lord. Let her stay at home in Jerusalem, that she may know nothing of the turmoil of the world; and Solomon will gladly grant her his grace. But, if she intermeddle with external things more than she need, and her heart be without; though her body, like a clod of earth, be within the four walls, she is gone forth with Shimei, out of Jerusalem, just as he did after his bond-servants. Those bond-servants are her five natural senses, which ought to be at home and serve their lady. Then she serveth well the anchoress her lady, when she useth them all rightly for the profit of her soul, when the eyes are upon the book, or upon some other good work, the ears attentive to God's words, the mouth in pious prayers. And if she guard them ill, and let them, through heedlessness, run away from her service, and follow them abroad with her heart—as it most frequently happens that if the sense go out the heart goeth out after it—she breaketh Solomon's covenant

with the unfortunate Shimei, and is doomed to death.

Wherefore, my dear sisters, be not ye Shimei, but be Esther the hidden, and ye shall be exalted in the blessedness of heaven. For the name of Esther signifieth not only "hidden," but, moreover, "exalted among the people;" and Esther, as her name saith, was so exalted to be queen from being a poor maiden. In this word Esther, hiding and highness are both conjoined; and not highness only, but highness among people, to shew truly that they who hide themselves rightly in their monastery, shall be worthily exalted in heaven above other people. Both Esther's name and her exaltation prove what I say to be true. And now, consider that ye are in Jerusalem; and that ye have fled to the sanctuary of the church; for there is not one of you who has not, at some time, been a thief against God. Men are waiting for you, of that be ye well assured, without, as they do for thieves who have fled for refuge to church. But keep close within, not only your body, for that is least worthy, but your five senses, and your heart above all, and that in which is all the life of the soul. For, if it has stepped without, it has then only to be led forth toward the gallows-tree of hell. Be in fear and dread

of every man, as much as the thief is, lest he draw you without, that is, deceive you in some way, and lie in wait that he may lay his clutches upon you. Fervently pray to God, like a thief who has fled for refuge to the church, to keep and protect you from all those who lie in wait for you. Be always chirping your prayers, as the sparrow doth that is alone. For this word, alone, is said of solitary life, and of a solitary place, where one may be Esther the hidden—out of the world—and acquire, better than in the crowd, every spiritual good; and, therefore, David compareth an anchoress to the pelican, which leads a solitary life, and to the sparrow, that is alone.

The sparrow hath yet another property which is very good for an anchoress, although it is hated: that is, the falling sickness. For it is very necessary that an anchoress of holy and highly pious life have the falling sickness. I do not mean the sickness that is commonly so called; but that which I call falling sickness is an infirmity of the body, or temptation of carnal frailty, by which she seems to herself to fall down from her holy and exalted piety. She would otherwise grow presumptuous, or have too good an opinion of herself, and so come to nothing. The flesh would rebel and become too insubordinate

towards its mistress, if it were not beaten, and would make the soul sick, if sickness did not subdue the body with disease, nor the spirit with sin. If neither of these were sick—which is seldom the case—pride would awaken, which is the most dangerous of all sicknesses. If God try an anchoress with any external evil; or, the enemy within, with spiritual disorders, as pride, wrath, envy, or with the lusts of the flesh, she hath the falling sickness, which is said to be the sparrows' infirmity. God so wills it, in order that she may be always humble; and, with low estimation of herself, fall to the earth, lest she become proud.

Now, dear sisters, we hit upon the fourth part, which I said should be of many temptations. For there are external and internal trials, and many sorts of each. I promise to teach you a safeguard against them, and a remedy; and how any one who hath them may gather, from this division, comfort and consolation against them all. That I, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, may keep my engagement to you, may He grant to me through your prayer.

[Here beginneth the Fourth Part of the work, which is concerning many temptations, external and internal.]

LET not any one of remarkably pious life think that she may not be tempted. The good, who have reached a high degree of virtue, are more tempted than the frail; and there is good reason for it; for the greater and higher the hill is, there is the more wind upon it. As the hill of holy and pious life is greater and higher, so the fiend's puffs, which are the winds of temptations, are stronger thereon and more frequent. If there is any anchoress who feeleth no temptations, let her dread greatly on that point, lest she should be too much and too strongly tempted. For so saith St. Gregory: "Then art thou chiefly assaulted, when thou dost not feel that thou art assaulted." A sick man hath two alarming states. The one is when he doth not feel his own sickness; and therefore seeketh not a physician nor medicine, nor asketh any man's advice, and dieth suddenly before any one expecteth it. This is the anchoress who does not know what

temptation is. To such the angel speaketh in the Revelation, and saith: "Thou sayest 'I am rich, and have need of nothing;' and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Thou sayest that thou needest no medicine; but thou art blind-hearted, and seest not that thou art poor and naked of holiness, and spiritually wretched. The other alarming state which the sick man hath, is quite the opposite of this. It is when he feeleth so much pain that he cannot bear that any one should touch his sore, or apply a remedy to it. This is an anchoress who feeleth her temptations so forcibly, and is so sore afraid of them, that no spiritual comfort can gladden her, nor make her to understand that she may and shall, through them, be the better saved. Nay, is it not recorded in the Gospel by God himself, that the Holy Spirit led our Lord into a solitary place to lead a solitary life, that he might be tempted of the hellish adversary? But his temptation, who might not sin, was alone without sin.

Know then, dear sisters, first of all, that there are two sorts of temptations—two kinds of trials—external and internal—and both are manifold. External temptation is that from which come things pleasing

or displeasing—without or within. Displeasing without—as sickness, want, shame, mishap, and every bodily hurt that is painful to the flesh. Displeasing within—as grief of heart, anger, and wrath. Likewise, in regard to what is pleasing without—as health of body, food, drink, and sufficient clothing, and every thing of this kind that is agreeable to the flesh. Pleasing without—as any false joy, either from the praise of men, or if one is more beloved, more caressed, more benefited, or honoured than another. The part of this temptation which is called exterior is more deceiving than the other part. Both are, however, one temptation; and each within and without—both of them two parts. And it is called exterior, because it is always either of a thing without, or of a thing within; and the exterior thing is the temptation. These temptations come sometimes from God, and sometimes from man. Temptation from God—as the death of friends, and the sickness of them, or of thyself, poverty, mishap, and such things, also health and wealth. Temptation from man—as any kind of wrong, either by word or deed to thee or thine; likewise praise, or deed of kindness. These come also from God, but not as the others do, without any intermediate cause; and with all of them he trieth

man, to find how he fears and loves him. Inward temptations are of various kinds—immoral indulgences, or the desire of them, fraudulent designs which, nevertheless, seem just. These inward temptations come from the devil, or from the world, and sometimes from our flesh. To resist the outward temptations, there is need of patience, that is, of meek resolution. To resist the inward, there is need of wisdom and spiritual strength. We are now to speak of the outward temptation, and to teach those who are subject to it how they may, with God's grace, find a remedy; namely, self-command, to support them under it.

Blessed is he, or she, and happy, who hath patience in temptation; for when she is tried, it is said, She shall be crowned with the crown of life, which God hath promised to his elect. When she is tried, it is said—and it is well said—For God so trieth his elect, as the gold in the fire. The false gold perisheth therein, but the good gold cometh out brighter. Sickness is a fire which is patiently to be endured, but no fire so purifieth the gold as it doth the soul.

Sickness which God sends; but not that which some catch through their own folly. For many make themselves sick through their fool-hardiness:

and this displeaseth God. But the sickness which God sends doth these six things: it washeth away the sins that have been formerly committed; it guardeth against those that are likely to be committed; it trieth patience; preserveth humility; increaseth the reward; and maketh the patient sufferer equal to a martyr. Thus is sickness the physician of the soul, and heals its wounds, and protects from receiving more; as God saith that it should, if sickness did not prevent it. Sickness maketh man to understand what he is, and to know himself; and, like a good master, it corrects a man, to teach him how powerful God is, and how frail is the happiness of this world. Sickness is the goldsmith who, in the blessedness of heaven, gildeth thy crown. The greater the sickness is, the busier is the goldsmith; and the longer it lasteth, the more exceedingly doth he brighten it; that they may be equal to martyrs through temporal suffering. What greater favour can there be to those who had deserved the pains of hell world without end? Would not he be accounted of all men the most foolish, who refused a buffet, instead of a spear's wound—a needle's pricking, for a beheading—a beating, instead of being hanged on the gallows of hell, world without end? God knows, dear sisters, all the woe of this world

compared to the very least pain of hell is nothing but ball-play. It is all not so much as a small drop of dew to the broad sea and all the waters of the world. She, therefore, who may escape that fearful state of suffering, and those awful pains, through a sickness that passeth away, through any evil of the present life, may call herself happy.

On the other hand, learn now many remedies against the outward temptation, which proceeds from the wickedness of man. For that of which I have already spoken is of God's sending. Whosoever harmeth thee by word or deed, consider and understand that he is thy file, and fileth away all thy rust, and all the roughness of thy sins; and though he wears himself away, unhappy man! as the file doth, yet, he maketh thee smooth and brighteneth thy soul.

Again, reflect, that whosoever harmeth thee, or inflicteth upon thee any wrong, shame, anger, or suffering—reflect, that he is God's rod; and that God beats thee with him, and chasteneth, as a father doth his dear child, with the rod. For thus he saith that he doth, by the mouth of St. John, in the Revelation, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." He beateth no man but him whom he loveth and accounteth his child, any more than thou wouldst

beat a strange child, though it were naughty. But, let him not think well of himself because he is God's rod. For, as the father, when he hath sufficiently beaten his child, and hath well chastised him, casteth the rod into the fire, because he is naughty no longer; so, the Father of Heaven, when he, by means of a bad man or woman, hath beaten his dear child for his good, casteth the rod, that is, the bad man, into the fire of hell. Wherefore, he saith in another place, "Mine is vengeance, and I will repay;" as if he had said: Avenge not yourselves, nor bear ill will, nor curse when any one offends you, but immediately reflect that he is your father's rod, and that he will pay him what is due for his rod-service. And is not that an ill-behaved child that scratches again and bites the rod? But the good child, when beaten, if his father bid him, kisseth the rod. And do ye the same, my dear sisters, for so your Father commandeth you, that ye kiss, not with mouth, but with heart-love, those whom he beateth you with. "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you: and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you." This is God's commandment, which is much more acceptable to him than that thou eat bread made of grit, or wear hair-cloth. Love your foemen, he saith,

and do good, if ye have power, to those who fight against you; and if you cannot do any thing else, pray earnestly for those who do or say any evil against you. And, as the Apostle teacheth, return never evil for good, but always good for evil, as our Lord himself did, and all his saints. If ye thus do God's commandment, then are ye his dutiful children, who kiss the rods, wherewith he hath thrashen you. Now, some one may perhaps say, his or her soul I will love well, but by no means his body; but this is saying nothing at all. The soul and the body are but one man, and one doom betides them both. Wilt thou separate what God hath joined together? Let no man be so mad as to put asunder that which God hath joined together.

Reflect again thus; that if a child stumble against any thing, or hurt himself, men beat the thing that he hurteth himself upon, and the child is well pleased, and forgetteth all his hurt, and stoppeth his tears. Wherefore, take comfort to yourselves; "The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." On the day of Judgment, God will do as if he said, "Daughter, did this person hurt thee? Did he cause thee to stumble in wrath, or in grief of heart, in shame, or in suffering? Look, daughter, look how he shall

pay for it; and ye shall see them bounced with the devil's mallets, so that they shall be weary of life." And ye shall be well pleased with this, for your will and the will of God shall be in such unison that ye shall wish whatsoever He wills, and He whatsoever ye wish.

Above all other thoughts, in all your sufferings, reflect always deeply upon the sufferings of Christ—that the Ruler of the world was content, for his bond-servants, to endure such ignominy and contempt—buffets, mocking, blindfolding, crowning with thorns, which pierced his head so that streams of blood ran down; and that they left his sweet body bound naked to the hard pillar, and beaten so that the precious blood ran down on every side; the poisonous drink that they gave him when he thirsted, on the cross; the shaking of their heads at him; who cried out in derision so loud, "Look here! he that healed others, Behold now how he healeth and helpeth himself." Turn back to the place where I spoke of how he was pained in all his five senses; and compare all your sorrow, sickness, and other distresses, and wrongs, by word or deed, and all that man may suffer, with all that He suffered, and you will easily see how little it amounteth to, especially, if you reflect that He was

quite innocent; and that He endured all this not for himself, for He did no sin. If ye suffer grief, ye have deserved worse, and all that ye suffer, is for yourselves.

Go ye now, then, along the hard and toilsome way toward the great feast of heaven, where your glad friend expecteth your coming, more joyfully than foolish worldly men go by the green way toward the gallows-tree, and to the death of hell. It is better to go toward heaven sick, than in health toward hell, and to mirth with want, than to woe with abundance. Not, however, but that wretched worldly men buy hell dearer than ye do heaven. Solomon saith, "The way of sinners is planted over with stones;" that is, with severe afflictions. Of one thing be ye well assured—that a harsh word that ye bear with patience, or a single day's weariness, or a sickness of an hour—if any one were to offer to buy one of these from you at the day of Judgment; that is, if one were to offer to buy from you the reward that ariseth from it, ye would not sell it for all the gold in the world. For this shall be your song before our Lord: "We are glad now, O Lord, for the days in which thou didst humble us with the wrongs we suffered from other men; and we are glad now, O Lord, for the

years in which we were sick and saw pain and sorrow." Every worldly affliction is God's ambassador. Men will receive honourably the messenger of a man of rank, and make him gladly welcome; and so much the more if he is intimately acquainted with the King of Heaven. And who was more intimate with the heavenly King while he dwelt here, than was this ambassador?—that is, worldly suffering, which never left him until his life's end. This messenger that I am speaking of to you—what doth he say to you? He comforteth you in this manner. As God loved me, saith he, he sent me to his dear friend. My coming, and my abiding, though it may seem bitter, is yet salutary. Must not that thing be dreadful, the shadow of which you could not look upon for dread? And if the very shadow were so sharp and so hot, that ye might not feel it without pain, what would you say of the very awful thing itself, from which it comes? Know ye this for certain, that all the misery of this world is only as a shadow in comparison with the misery of hell. I am the shadow, saith this messenger, that is, this world's suffering: ye must needs receive me, or that dreadful misery of which I am the shadow. Whoso receiveth me gladly, and maketh me cheerfully welcome, my Lord sends her

word that she is freed from the thing of which I am the shadow. Lo! thus speaketh God's messenger; and therefore, saith St. James, "Count it all joy to fall into divers of these temptations that are called outward;" and St. Paul saith, "All those temptations wherewith we are now beaten, seem sorrow and not joy; but they turn afterwards to prosperity and eternal blessedness."

Ye, my dear sisters, of the anchoresses that I know, are those who have least need to be fortified against these temptations; sickness only excepted. For I know not any anchoress that with more abundance, or more honour, hath all that is necessary to her than ye three have; our Lord be thanked for it. For ye take no thought for food or clothing, neither for yourselves nor for your maidens. Each of you hath from one friend all that she requireth; nor need that maiden seek either bread, or that which is eaten with bread, further than at his hall. God knoweth many others know little of this abundance, but are full often distressed with want, and with shame and suffering. If this comes into their hand, it may be a comfort to them. Ye have more reason to dread the soft than the hard part of these temptations, which are called outward. For the sorcerer would fain cajole you,

if he might, and with flattery render you perverse, if ye were less gentle and docile. There is much talk of you, how gentle women you are; for your goodness and nobleness of mind beloved of many; and sisters of one father and of one mother; having, in the bloom of your youth, forsaken all the pleasures of the world and become anchoresses.

All this is a strong temptation, and might soon deprive you of much of your reward. "O my people, they that call thee blessed, the same deceive thee:" this is the word of God by Isaiah. Whosoever saith before you, "Happy is the mother that bare you; and the greater blessing is it that ye were born," deceives you, and betrays you. Enough has been said before of flattering—of this world's flattering—that is, abundance of worldly things. When ye are in want of nothing, then he fawneth upon you; then doth he offer you a kiss; but evil betide his kiss; for it is Judas's kiss wherewith he kisseth you. Against these temptations be on your guard, dear sisters—whatsoever comes from without to tempt you, pleasing or unpleasing, keep your heart always undisturbed within, lest the outward give rise to the inward temptation.

The inward temptation, like the outward, is twofold: for the outward temptation in adversity is

displeasure, and in prosperity pleasure that tendeth to sin. I say this because there is some pleasure and some displeasure that merits much reward; as pleasure in the love of God, and displeasure on account of sin. Now, as I say, the inward temptation is twofold: carnal and spiritual. Carnal, as of lechery, gluttony, and sloth. Spiritual, as of pride, envy, and wrath. Wrath is the inward temptation; but that which exciteth wrath is the outward temptation. It is the same with regard to covetousness. Thus, the inward temptations are the seven chief sins and their foul progeny. Carnal temptation may be compared to a foot wound; and spiritual temptation, which is more to be dreaded, may, because of the danger, be called a breast wound. But it seemeth to us that carnal temptations are greater, because they are easily felt. The other we do not notice, although we often have them, yet they are great and odious in the bright eyes of God; and are, for that reason, much more to be dreaded. For the other, which are sensibly felt, men seek a physician and a remedy. The spiritual hurts do not appear sore, nor do they heal them with confession, nor with penitence, and they draw men on to eternal death before they are in the least aware.

Holy men and holy women are often tempted with the strongest of all temptations; and for their greater good: for in the fight against them they acquire the blissful crown of victory. Yet observe how they lament in Jeremiah: "Our foes are swifter than the eagles: upon the hills they climbed after us, and there fought with us: and also in the wilderness they lay in wait to slay us." Our foes are three: the devil, the world, and our own flesh, as I said before: nor is it easy, at times, for a man to know which of these three attacketh him: for every one of them helpeth each other. Yet the devil naturally inciteth us to malignant vices, as pride, haughtiness, envy and wrath, and to their pernicious progeny, which will be hereafter named. The flesh naturally inclines us to luxury, ease, and self-indulgence. And the world urges men to covet the world's wealth, and prosperity, and worship, and other such gewgaws, and deludeth foolish men to fall in love with a shadow. These foes, saith he, pursue us on the hills, and lie in wait for us in the wilderness that they may do us harm. Hill—that is a life of exalted piety; where the assaults of the devil are often strongest. The Wilderness is a life of solitude—of monastic seclusion. For, in like manner as all wild beasts are in the wilderness, and

will not suffer the approach of man, but flee away when they hear or see him, so should anchoresses, above all other women, be wild in this manner; and then they will be above all others dearest to our Lord, and they will appear to him most lovely, for of all kinds of flesh that of wild deer is the choicest and most delicious. In this wilderness journeyed our Lord's people, as we are told in Exodus, toward the blessed land of Jerusalem, which he had promised them: and ye, my dear sisters, are journeying by the same way toward the Jerusalem above—to the kingdom which he hath promised his elect. Go, however, very cautiously: for in this wilderness there are many evil beasts—the lion of pride, the serpent of venomous envy, the unicorn of wrath, the bear of dead sloth, the fox of covetousness, the swine of greediness, the scorpion with the tail of stinking lechery, that is, lustfulness. These, now, are the seven chief sins detailed in order.

The Lion of Pride hath a great number of whelps; and I will name some of them. The first is called Vain Glory; that is, any one who has a high opinion of any thing that she doth, and wishes to have it talked of, and is well pleased if she is praised, and displeased if she is not commended as much as she

wishes to be. The next whelp is called Indignation; that is, any one who thinketh contemptuously of aught that she sees or hears of another, or who despiseth correction or instruction from an inferior. The third whelp is Hypocrisy; that is, she who maketh herself seem better than she is. The fourth is Presumption; that is, one who taketh in hand more than she is able to perform; or meddleth with any thing which doth not belong to her. The fifth whelp is called Disobedience; that is, the child that obeys not his parents; a subordinate minister, his bishop; a parishioner, his priest; a maiden, her mistress; every inferior, his superior. The sixth whelp is Loquacity; those feed this whelp who are great talkers, who boast, judge others, lie sometimes, scoff, upbraid, scold, flatter, excite laughter. The seventh whelp is Blasphemy; the nurse of this whelp is he that sweareth great oaths, or curseth bitterly, or speaketh irreverently of God, or of his saints, on account of any thing that he suffereth, seeth, or heareth. The eighth whelp is Impatience; he feedeth this whelp who is not patient under all wrongs and all evils. The ninth whelp is Contumacy; and this whelp is fed by any one who is self-willed in the thing that she hath undertaken to do, be it good or be it

evil, so that no wiser counsel is able to turn her from her purpose. There are many other that are derived from wealth and prosperity, high descent, fine clothes, wit, beauty, strength; pride groweth even out of extraordinary piety and pure morals. Many more whelps than I have named hath the Lion of Pride whelped; but think and meditate very seriously upon these, for I pass lightly over and only name them. But wheresoever I go most quickly forward, dwell ye the longer; for where I lightly touch upon one, there are ten or twelve. Whosoever hath any of those vices which I have named before, or any like them, she certainly hath pride. In whatsoever fashion her kirtle is shaped or sewed, she is the lion's companion, of which I have spoken above, and nourishes his fierce whelps within her breast.

The serpent of venomous Envy hath a brood of seven: Ingratitude. He breeds this young one, who doth not acknowledge a benefit, but depreciates it, or altogether forgetteth it. A benefit, I say—not only which a man confers, but which God confers or hath conferred upon him or her, greater than she thinks, and might understand that it is, if she bethought herself well. Of this vice men take too little heed, although it is, of all others, one most hateful to God,

and most opposed to his grace. The second-born is Rancour or Odium; that is, Malice or Hatred. Whatsoever she doeth, who cherisheth this young one in her breast, is displeasing to God. The third of the brood is Grieving-at-the-good-of-another. The fourth is being Glad-of-his-evil: laughing or scoffing if any misfortune befall him. The fifth is Exposing-faults. The sixth is Backbiting. The seventh is Upbraiding or Contempt. Wheresoever any of these was or is, there was or is the offspring or the old mother of the venomous serpent of hell, Envy.

The unicorn of Wrath, which beareth on his nose the horn with which he butteth at all whom he reacheth, hath six whelps. The first is Contention or Strife. The second is Rage. The third is contumelious Reproach. The fourth is Cursing. The fifth is Striking. The sixth is Wishing-that-Evil-may-happen to a man himself, or to his friend, or to his possessions.

The bear of heavy Sloth hath these whelps: Torpor is the first; that is, a lukewarm heart, which ought to light up into a flame in the love of our Lord. The next is Pusillanimity; that is, too faint-hearted, and too reluctant withal, to undertake any thing arduous in the hope of help from God, and in confidence of His grace, and not of her own strength The third is

Dulness-of-heart. Whosoever doeth good, and yet doeth it with a dead and sluggish heart, hath this whelp. The fourth whelp is Idleness; that is, any one who stands still doing no good at all. The fifth is a Grudging, grumbling Heart. The sixth is a deadly Sorrow for the loss of any worldly possession, or of a friend, or for any displeasure, except for sin only. The seventh is Negligence, either in saying, or doing, or providing, or remembering, or taking care of any thing that she hath to keep. The eighth is Despair. This last bear's whelp is the fiercest of all, for it gnaweth and wasteth the benignant kindness, and great mercy, and unlimited grace of God.

The fox of Covetousness hath these whelps: Treachery and Guile, Theft, Rapine, Extortion, and Compulsion, False-testimony or Perjury, Simony, Tribute, Usury, Unwillingness to give or lend, sometimes Murder. These vices are, for many reasons, compared to the fox. I will mention two: there is much guile in the fox, and so is there in covetousness of worldly possessions; another reason is, the fox worrieth all the sheep in a flock, although he can ravenously devour only one. In like manner a man greedy of wealth, coveteth what might suffice for many thousands; but, though his heart should break,

he cannot spend upon himself more than one man's portion. All that man or woman desireth more than is sufficient for leading life comfortably, according to their station, is covetousness, and the root of mortal sin. This is true religion—that every one, according to his station, should borrow from this frail world as little as possible of food, clothes, goods, and of all worldly things. Understand rightly this word, which I say to you—every one according to his station—for it is feathered like an arrow, ready to be let fly; that is, charged with intelligence, as a messenger. Know ye this, that ye may make in many words much strength. Think long about it, and by that one word understand many words that relate thereto; for if I should write them all, when should I make an end?

The Swine of greediness; that is, Gluttony, hath pigs thus named: The first is called Too Early; the second, Too Daintily; the third, Too Voraciously; the fourth, Too Largely; the fifth, Too Often, in drink more than in meat. Thus are these pigs farrowed, I speak of them briefly; for I am not afraid, my dear sisters, that ye feed them.

The Scorpion of Lechery—that is, of lustfulness—hath such a progeny, that it doth not become a modest mouth to name the names of some of

them; for the name alone might offend all modest ears, and defile all clean hearts. Those may properly be named whose names are well known; and they are—the more is the harm—too well known to many; as Whoredom, Adultery, Loss-of-Virginity, and Incest; that is, between kindred, carnally or spiritually; which is divided into many kinds. One is, impure desire to commit the uncleanness with the mind's consent; that is, when the mind and the heart oppose not, but are well pleased, and yearn after all that the flesh incites to, and help each other to the same end—to know and witness it; to hunt after it; with wooing, with tugging, or with any inciting; with giggling laughter; with immodest looks; with light gestures; with gifts; with enticing words; with love speech; kiss; improper handlings; which are deadly sins; loving tide, or time, or place for getting into such harlotry; and other such forerunners, which she must avoid who would not speedily fall into great uncleanness; as St. Austin saith, "She who would keep her conscience clean and fair, must flee from the occasions that are wont frequently to open the entrance and let in sin." I dare not name the unnatural offspring of this diabolical scorpion with the venomous tail. But sorry may she

be who, with or without a companion, hath so fed any of the progeny of licentiousness—which I cannot speak of for shame, and dare not for dread—lest some one should learn more evil than she knoweth, and be thereby tempted. But let every one reflect upon her own accursed devices when tempted by concupiscence. For, howsoever it is done, willingly and awake, with the satisfaction of the flesh, except in wedlock only, it is a deadly sin. In youth extraordinary follies are committed: let her who feeleth herself guilty, belch it all out in confession, utterly, as she committed it; otherwise she is condemned, through that foul flame, to the everlasting fire of hell. Let her shake out, with confession, the scorpion's brood which she nourisheth in her breast, and slay it with amendment. It is sufficiently evident why I have compared pride to a lion, and envy to a serpent, and so of all the rest, except this last, that is, why lustfulness is compared to a scorpion. But, now, here is the reason of it plain and manifest. Solomon saith, "He that hold hath of a woman is as though he held a scorpion." The scorpion is a kind of worm that hath a face, as it is said, somewhat like that of a woman, and is a serpent behind; putteth on a pleasant countenance, and fawns upon you with her

head, but stingeth with her tail. Such is lechery, which is the devil's beast, which he leads to market, and to every place where people are gathered together, and offereth it for sale, and cheateth many, because they look only at the beautiful head. The head is the beginning of incontinence, and its delight, which, while it lasts, seemeth so very sweet. The tail, that is, the end thereof, is sorrowful repentance of it; and it stingeth her with the venom of bitter compunction, and penance. And they may be called happy who find the tail to be such; for the venom passeth away. And if it ensueth not here, the tail and the poisonous end is the external punishment of hell. And, is not he a foolish purchaser who, when he is about to buy a horse or an ox, will look only at the head? Therefore when the devil presenteth his beast, and offereth to sell it, and asketh thy soul in exchange for it, he always hideth the tail, and sheweth the head to view. But do thou go all around it, and thus view the end, and how the tail stingeth; and quickly flee away from it, ere thou be envenomed.

Thus, my dear sisters, in the wilderness in which ye are journeying with God's people toward Jerusalem's land, that is, the kingdom of heaven, there are such beasts and such worms; nor do I know any sin which

may not be traced to one of those seven, or to their progeny. Unsettled belief in the doctrines of religion —is it not of pride? Disobedience belongeth to it, Sorcery, and false reckoning; believing in luck, and in dreams, and all witchcraft, receiving the Eucharist, or any other sacrament, when in deadly sin—is it not that species of pride which I called presumption, if it is known what kind of sin it is? and if it is not known then it is heedlessness, under the head of Accidia, which I called Sloth. He that doth not forewarn another of any evil or loss—is he not guilty of slothful negligence or malignant envy? Dishonest tithing, withholding a legacy, or any thing found, or lent—is it not covetousness or theft? Retaining another's wages, when due—is it not downright robbery? This is under covetousness. Or, if any one keeps any thing lent, or committed to his care, worse than he thinks that he ought—is it not treachery, or slothful negligence? In like manner an unreasonable command, or foolishly plighted troth, and being long without receiving the rite of confirmation, going insincerely to confession, or delaying too long to teach one's godchild the Lord's Prayer and the Creed—these, and all similar faults, are related to sloth, which is the fourth mother of the seven deadly sins. She

who hath drunk any potion, or done any thing whereby no child should be conceived by her, or that when conceived should perish—is not this downright man-slaughter, caused by lust? No man would be able to reckon up all sins separately by their own special names; but in those which I have mentioned all the others are included; and there is not, I think, any man who may not understand his own sins in particular under some of the same general heads that are here written. Of those seven beasts, and of their offspring in the wilderness, and of a solitary life, we have spoken thus far—which beasts are endeavouring to destroy all mortals. The Lion of Pride slayeth all the proud, and all those who are elated and lofty in heart. The venomous serpent slayeth all the envious, and all who have base malicious thoughts. The Unicorn, all the wrathful; and so of the others in succession. In respect to God they are slain; but they live to the fiend, and are all in his retinue, and serve him in his court, every one in the office appropriated to him.

The proud are his trumpeters; they draw in the wind of worldly praise, and then, with vain boasting, puff it out again, as the trumpeter doth, to make a noise—a loud strain of music to shew their vain glory. But, if they reflected well upon God's trum-

peters, and upon the trumpets of the angels of heaven, which shall blow terribly in the four quarters of the world, before the awful judgment, Arise, ye dead, arise! come to the Lord's judgment, to be judged; where no proud trumpeter may be saved,—if they reflected justly upon this, they would soon enough sound in a lower strain in the devil's service. Of those trumpeters Jeremiah saith, "A wild ass accustomed to the wilderness in the desire of his heart snuffeth up the wind of his love." Of those who draw in wind, for love of praise, Jeremiah saith this, as I said before.

There are some Jesters who know of no other means of exciting mirth but to make wry faces, and distort their mouth, and scowl with their eyes. This art the unhappy, envious man practiseth in the devil's court, to excite to laughter their envious Lord. For, if any one saith or doeth well, they cannot, by any means, look that way with the direct eye of a good heart; but wink in another direction, and look on the left hand, and obliquely: and if there is any thing to blame or dislike, there they scowl with both eyes; and when they hear of any good, they hang down both their ears; but their desire of evil is ever wide open. Then they distort their mouth, when

they turn good to evil; and if there is somewhat of evil, they distort it, and make it worse by detraction. These are their own prophets—foretelling their own end. They shew beforehand how the hateful fiend shall strike terror into them with his hideous grinning; and how they shall themselves gnash their teeth, and beat their breasts, with rueful looks for the great anguish of the pains of hell. But they are the less to be pitied, because they have learned beforehand their trade of making grim cheer.

The wrathful man fenceth before the devil with knives, and he is his knife-thrower, and playeth with swords, and beareth them upon his tongue by the sharp point. Sword and knife both are sharp and cutting words which he casteth forth, and therewith attacks others. And it forebodes how the devils shall play with them, with their sharp awls, and skirmish about with them, and toss them like a pilch-clout every one towards another, and strike them through with hell-swords, which are keen, cutting, and horrible pains.

The sluggard lieth and sleepeth in the devil's bosom, as his dear darling; and the devil applieth his mouth to his ears, and tells him whatever he will. For, this is certainly the case with every one who is

not occupied in any thing good : the devil assiduously talks, and the idle lovingly receive hlis essons. He that is idle and careless is the devil's bosom-sleeper : but he shall on Doomsday be fearfully startled with the dreadful sound of the angels' trumpets, and shall awaken in terrible amazement in hell. "Arise, ye dead, who lie in graves : arise, and come to the Saviour's Judgment."

The covetous man is the devil's ash-gatherer, and lieth always in the ashes, and goeth about ashes, and busily bestirs himself to heap up much, and to rake many together, and bloweth therein, and blindeth himself, poketh, and maketh therein figures of arithmetic, as those accountants do who have much to reckon up. This is all the joy of this fool, and the devil seeth all this game, and laugheth so that he bursteth. Every wise man well understandeth this ; that both gold and silver, and all earthly goods, are nothing but earth and ashes, which blind every man that bloweth upon them ; that is, disquieteth himself for them ; is proud in heart through them ; and all that he heapeth up and gathereth together, and possesses of any thing more than is necessary, is nothing but ashes, and in hell it shall all become toads and adders to him ; and both his kirtel and his covering,

as Isaiah saith, shall be of worms, who would not feed nor clothe the needy, "The worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee."

The greedy glutton is the devil's purveyor; for he always haunts the cellar or the kitchen. His heart is in the dishes; all his thought is of the tablecloth; his life is in the tun, his soul in the pitcher. He cometh into the presence of his Lord besmutted and besmeared, with a dish in one hand, and a bowl in the other. He talks much incoherently, and staggereth like a drunken man who seemeth about to fall, looks at his great belly, and the devil laughs so that he bursteth. God thus threateneth such persons by Isaiah, "my servants shall eat, but ye shall always hunger;" and ye shall be food for devils, world without end! "How much she hath glorified herself, and hath lived deliciously so much torment and sorrow give her." Give the tosspot molten brass to drink, and pour it into his wide throat, that he may die inwardly. Lo! such is the Judgment of God against the glutton, and against drunkards, in the Apocalypse.

The lecherous have properly their own name in the devil's court. For, in those great courts, they are called lechers who have so lost shame, that they are ashamed of nothing, but seek how they may work the

most wickedness. In the devil's court the lecher foully defileth himself, and all his fellows, and stinketh of that filth, and pleaseth his lord with that same stinking odour, much better than he could with any sweet incense. In the Lives of the Fathers, it is told how offensively he smells before God. The angel shewed this truly and evidently who, when the proud lecher came riding by, held his nose, and did not so for the putrid corpse which he helped the holy hermit to bury. Of all others, therefore, they have the foulest office in the devil's court who thus befoul themselves; and he shall befoul them, and punish them with never ending stink in the torments of hell.

Ye have now heard one part, my dear sisters, of what are called the seven capital sins, and of their progeny, and of the offices which the men who have married these seven hags serve in the devil's court, and why they are greatly to be hated and avoided. Ye are very far from them, our Lord be thanked; yet the foul smell of this last vice—that is, of lechery, stinketh so very offensively—for the devil soweth and bloweth it every where—that I am somewhat afraid lest, upon some occasion, it should get into the nose of your heart. For stench riseth upwards; and ye have climbed high, where there is much wind of strong

temptations. Our Lord give you wit and strength well to withstand.

An anchoress thinks that she shall be most strongly tempted in the first twelve months after she shall have begun her monastic life, and in the next twelve thereafter; and when, after many years, she feels them so strong, she is greatly amazed, and is afraid lest God may have quite forgotten her, and cast her off. Nay! it is not so. In the first years, it is nothing but ball-play; but now, observe well, by a comparison, how it fareth. When a man hath newly brought a wife home, he, with great gentleness, observes her manners. Though he sees in her any thing that he does not approve, yet he taketh no notice of it, and putteth on a cheerful countenance toward her, and carefully uses every means to make her love him, affectionately in her heart; and when he is well assured that her love is truly fixed upon him, he may then, with safety, openly correct her faults, which he previously bore with as if he knew them not: he becometh right stern, and assumes a severe countenance, in order still to try whether her love toward him might give way. At last when he perceives that she is completely instructed—that for nothing that he doth to her she loveth him less, but more and more, if

possible, from day to day, then he sheweth her that he loveth her sweetly, and doeth whatsoever she desires, as to one whom he loveth and knoweth—then is all that sorrow become joy. If Jesu Christ, your Spouse, doth thus to you, my dear sisters, let it not seem strange to you. For in the beginning it is only courtship, to draw you into love; but as soon as he perceives that he is on a footing of affectionate familiarity with you, he will now have less forbearance with you; but after the trial—in the end—then is the great joy. Just in the same way, when he wished to lead his people out of bondage—out of the power of Pharaoh—out of Egypt, he did for them all that they desired—miracles many and fair. He dried the Red Sea and made them a free way through it; and they went there dry-footed where Pharaoh and all their foes were drowned. Moreover, in the desert, when he had led them far within the wilderness, he let them suffer distress enough—hunger and thirst, and much toil, and great and numerous wars. In the end, he gave them rest, and all wealth and joy—all their desire, with bodily ease and abundance. Thus our Lord spareth at first the young and feeble, and draweth them out of this world gently, and with subtlety. But as soon as he sees them inured to

hardships, he lets war arise and be stirred up, and teacheth them to fight and to suffer want. In the end, after long toil, he giveth them sweet rest, here, I say, in this world, before they go to heaven; and then the rest seemeth so good after the labour; and the great plenty after the great want seemeth so very sweet.

Now, there are in the Psalter, under the two temptations that I spoke of first, which are the outward and the inward temptations, which give birth to all the other four sorts, thus distinguished: light and secret temptation, light and manifest temptation, powerful and secret temptation, powerful and manifest temptation, as we are to understand in this passage, "Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night," etc. Of light and secret temptation Job saith these words: "Small drops wear through the flint upon which they often fall;" and light secret temptations which men are not aware of, at times cause a faithful heart to err. Of the light manifest temptations, of which he saith thus, "A path shall shine after him," there is not so much cause to fear. Of powerful temptation, which is yet secret, Job maketh his complaint and saith: "My foes lay in wait for me with treachery and treason, and they prevailed against me, and there

was none who helped me." "Evil shall come upon thee, and thou shalt not know the rising thereof." Of the fourth temptation, which is powerful and manifest, he maketh his complaint and saith, "They have rushed in upon me, as when a wall is broken, and the gates open." The first and the third of these four temptations are, for the most part, under the inward class. The second and the fourth fall under the outward, and are almost always fleshly, and, therefore, easily felt. The other two are spiritual—concerning spiritual faults—and are often hidden and secret when they are most hurtful, and are, therefore, much more to be feared. Many a one who doth not suspect it, nourisheth in her breast some lion's whelp, or some viper's brood, that gnaws the soul. Of such Solomon saith, "Enemies have devoured the strength of his soul, and he knew it not." And in another place, "They drew me, and I felt not; they have beaten me, and I knew it not." Yet there is most reason to fear when the traitor of hell inciteth to any thing that appears at the same time to be very good, and yet is the bane of the soul, and the way to deadly sin. He doth thus whenever he may not shew his power by open wickedness. No, saith he, "I cannot make this one to sin through gluttony,

but I will do as the wrestler doth; I will pull her forcibly aside in the direction she most dreadeth, and cast her on the other side, and throw her down violently before she is at all aware;"—and he incites her to so much abstinence that she is rendered the less able to endure fatigue in the service of God, and leads so hard a life, and so torments her body, that her soul dieth. He sees another whom he cannot by any means make to entertain evil thoughts, so full of love and compassion is her heart. "I will," he thinketh, "make her even too compassionate. I will so manage that she shall love worldly goods, and think less upon God, and lose her reputation;" and he then puts such a thought as this into her kind heart: "Holy Mary! is not this man, or this woman, in great poverty: and no one will do them any good? They would if I were to ask them, and thus I might help them, and do alms." Thus he leads her on to collect, and to give first of all to the poor, afterwards to some friend, and at last to make a feast; and she grows quite worldly, and is transformed from an anchoress into a housewife of hell. God knows that one of them maketh such feasts; who thinketh that she is doing good, as foolish and silly people give her to understand, who flatter her for her liberality, and praise her, and

boast of the alms that she doth; how widely she is known: and she is well pleased at this, and leapeth up into pride. Some one will be ready enough to say that she is gathering a hoard; so that her house may be broken into, and she too. Lo! thus the hellish traitor pretendeth to be a faithful adviser. Never believe him. David calleth him, "bright shining devil;" and St. Paul, "angel of light:" for such he oft pretendeth to be, and seemeth to many. Account no vision that ye may see, waking or sleeping, or in a dream, to be any thing but an illusion; for it is only one of his stratagems. He hath often thus deceived wise men of holy and pious life; as him whom he came to in the wilderness in the form of a woman, and said that she had lost her way, and wept, as in misery, for a hospitable shelter: and again, of the other holy man whom he made to believe that he was an angel, and of his own father that he was the devil, and made him kill his father. Upon very many former occasions he had always told him the truth, that he might deceive him grievously in the end. Also, of the holy man whom he caused to come home to distribute his father's goods to the poor and needy, so long that he sinned mortally with a woman, and fell thus into despair, and died in deadly sin. Against the devilish

wiles of the man who telleth you such tales, hear how ye should guard yourselves, that he may not deceive you. Sometimes he has made one of you think that it would be flattery if she were to speak in a courteous manner, and if she humbly complained of her indigence; and thanked one for a benefit conferred: and yet, this was rather an arrogant attempt to put out the light of charity, than to do what was right. He endeavours to make some one so zealous to flee from the things that make the life of man agreeable, that she falls into the deadly evil of sloth; or into such profound thought that she becomes foolish. Some one has such a hatred of sin that she looks with proud contempt upon others who fall, when she ought to weep for them, and fear greatly for herself, lest she fall into like sin; and should say, as the holy man did, who sat and wept, and said, when he was told that one of his brethren had fallen into mortal sin, "Alas! he was strongly tempted before he thus fell—as he fell to-day, so," quoth he, "I may to-morrow."

Now, my dear sisters, I have named many temptations to you, under the seven sins; but yet not the thousandth part of those with which we are tempted: nor could they, as I think, by any mouth be particularly named. But in those which have

already been spoken of all the others are included. There are few persons, or none, in this world, who are not, at times, tempted with some of them. The wicked leech of hell hath so many boxes full of his electuaries, that to him who rejecteth one he offers another directly, and a third, and a fourth, and so on continually until he come to such a one as he in the end accepts, and then he plies him with it frequently. Think, now, of the number of his phials. Hear now, as I promised, many kinds of comfort against all temptations, and, with God's grace, thereafter the remedies.

Whosoever leadeth a life of exemplary piety may be certain of being tempted. This is the first comfort. For the higher the tower is, it hath always the more wind. Ye yourselves are towers, my dear sisters, but fear not while ye are so truly and firmly cemented all of you to one another with the lime of sisterly love. Ye need not fear any devil's blast, except the lime fail; that is to say, except your love for each other be impaired through the enemy. As soon as any of you undoeth her cement, she is soon swept forth; if the other do not hold her she is soon cast down, as a loose stone is from the coping of the tower, down into the deep ditch of some foul sin.

Here is another encouragement which ought greatly to comfort you when ye are tempted. The tower is not attacked, nor the castle, nor the city, after they are taken; even so the warrior of hell attacks, with temptation, none whom he hath in his hand; but he attacketh those whom he hath not. Wherefore, dear sisters, she who is not attacked may fear much lest she be already taken.

The third comfort is, that our Lord himself, in the Paternoster, teacheth us to pray, "Lord, our Father, suffer not that the fiend lead us quite into temptation." Lo! now, take good heed. He wishes not that ye pray that ye be not tempted, for that is our purgatory, and our purifying fire—but, that we be not entirely brought into it, with consciousness of heart and consent of the mind.

The fourth comfort is, the assurance of God's assistance in the contest, as St. Paul saith, "God is faithful: he will never suffer that the devil tempt us above what he seeth well that we can bear;" but, in the temptation, he hath placed a mark to the enemy; as though he said, Tempt her so far; but thou shalt go no further; and so far he giveth us strength to withstand, and the devil may not go a jot further. St. Gregory says, "Although the devil

always desires the affliction of the righteous, yet, unless he receive power from God, he ought not to be feared, because he can do nothing unless permitted."

And this is the fifth comfort, that he can do nothing to us but by God's permission. And this was well shewn, as the Gospel tells, when the devils which our Lord cast out of a man besought him and said, "If thou drive us hence, send us into this herd of swine:" and he permitted them. Observe how they might not, without leave, afflict the foul swine. And the swine immediately ran and drowned themselves in the sea. Holy Mary! they so stunk to the swine, that it was better for them to drown themselves than to bear them; and an unhappy creature made after the image of God beareth them in her breast, and thinketh nothing of it. All the evil that ever he did to Job, he always obtained permission to do it from our Lord. See that ye know the story in the dialogue, how the holy man was wont to say to the devil's serpent, "If thou hast leave," quoth he, "do sting, if thou mayest;" and he offered him his hand. But he had then no permission, except only to frighten him, if his faith had failed. But when God giveth him leave against his dear children—why is it, but

for their great advantage, although it may grieve them sore ?

The sixth comfort is, that our Lord, when He suffereth us to be tempted, playeth with us, as the mother with her young darling : she flies from him, and hides herself, and lets him sit alone, and look anxiously around, and call Dame ! dame ! and weep a while, and then leapeth forth laughing, with outspread arms, and embraceth and kisseth him, and wipeth his eyes. In like manner, our Lord sometimes leaveth us alone, and withdraweth His grace, His comfort, and His support, so that we feel no delight in any good that we do, nor any satisfaction of heart ; and yet, at that very time, our dear Father loveth us never the less, but doth it for the great love that he hath to us. And David understood this well when he said, " Lord, do not thou utterly forsake me." Observe, he was willing that he should forsake him, but not utterly. And there are six reasons why God, for our good, sometimes withdraweth himself : one is, that we may not become proud ; another is, that we may know our own feebleness, our great infirmity, and our weakness ; and that is a very great good, as St. Gregory saith, " It is great goodness in a man to know well his own

wretchedness and his weakness." "What doth he know," saith Solomon, "who hath not been tried?" And St. Austin confirmeth the testimony of St. Gregory, with these words, "Better is he who traceth and searcheth out well his own weakness, than he who measureth the height of the heaven and the depth of the earth." When two persons are carrying a burden, and one of them letteth it go, he that holdeth it up may then feel how it weigheth. Even so, dear sister, while God beareth thy temptation along with thee, thou never knowest how heavy it is, and therefore, upon some occasion, he leaveth thee alone, that thou mayest understand thine own feebleness, and call for his aid, and cry aloud for him. If he delays too long, hold it up well in the mean time, though it distress thee sore. For he that is certain that succour shall soon come to him, and yet yields up his castle to his enemies, is greatly to blame. Think here of the story, how the holy man in his temptation saw opposed to him on the west such a large army of devils, that through great terror he lost the firmness of his faith, until the other holy man said to him, "Look," quoth he, "toward the east." "We have," quoth he, "more than they are, to help on our side." The third reason, saith he, is that thou be never quite secure;

for security begetteth carelessness and presumption, and both these beget disobedience. The fourth reason why our Lord hideth himself is, that thou mayest seek him more earnestly, and call, and weep after him, as the little baby doth after his mother. After this is the fifth reason; that thou receive him the more joyfully on his return. The sixth reason is, that thou mayest the more wisely keep, and the more firmly hold him when thou hast got him, and say with his beloved, "I held him, and I will not let him go." These six reasons are under the sixth of the comforts that ye may have, my dear sisters, against temptations or trials.

The seventh comfort is, that all the saints were tempted like others in this world. Take this highest of all first. Our Lord said to St. Peter, "Behold, Satan is earnestly desirous to sift thee out of mine elect! but I have besought for thee that thy faith fail not utterly." St. Paul had, as he himself telleth, pricking of the flesh. "There was given me a sting of my flesh;" and he prayed our Lord earnestly that he would remove it from him; and he would not, but said, "My grace shall keep thee, that thou shalt not be overcome: but be strong in weakness." This is great power. All the other

saints are crowned on account of their resisting temptation. Was not St. Sara tempted in her flesh full thirteen years ? but, because she well knew that in her great distress the great reward sprung up, she would never beseech our Lord that he would entirely deliver her from it : but this was always her prayer, "Lord," quoth she, "give me strength to resist." After thirteen years came the accursed spirit who had tempted her—black as a negro—and began to cry out, "Sara, thou hast conquered me." And she answered him and said, "Thou liest," quoth she, "foul thing; not I, but Jesus Christ my Lord hath done it." Behold ! how the deceiver wished to make her at last mount up into pride. But she was full well aware of it, and attributed the victory entirely to the power of God. Ye know well how St. Benedict, St. Anthony, and the other saints were tempted, and, through the temptations, proved to be true champions, and so justly deserved the crown of victory. And this, in the next place, is the eighth comfort, that in like manner as the goldsmith purifieth the gold in the fire, even so doth God the soul in the fire of temptation.

The ninth comfort is, if the fiend with temptation grieveth thee sore, thou grievest him a thousand times

more and sorer when thou resistest; and that for three reasons; namely, one is, that he loseth, as Origen saith, his power to tempt ever thereafter to such kind of sin. Another is, that he still further addeth to his own punishment. The third is, that he frets away his own heart with anger and vexation, that he, contrary to his intention, placeth thee in a temptation which thou resistest; increaseth thy reward; and instead of the punishment which he thought to bring thee to, he braideth for thee the crown of joy. And not one or two, but "as many times as thou overcomest him, so many crowns;" that is to say, he prepareth for thee as many various kinds of joyful honours. For so saith St. Bernard. The story in the Lives of the Fathers also beareth witness of this, concerning the disciple who sat before his master, and his master fell asleep whilst he was teaching him, and slept until midnight; and when he awoke, he said, "Art thou yet here? Go and sleep directly." The holy man, his master, soon fell asleep again, as he had been previously in much watching, and he saw, in a very beautiful place, a throne set forth, and upon it seven crowns, and a voice came to him and said, "This throne and these seven crowns thy disciple hath this night earned." And the holy man awaked

from sleep, and called him to him. "Tell me," quoth he, "how was it with thee while I slept, and thou didst sit before me?" "I often thought," quoth he, "that I would awaken thee, and because thou didst sleep sweetly, I could not for pity; and then I thought that I would go away, for I had a desire to sleep, and would not without leave." "How oft," quoth he, "didst thou overcome thy thoughts thus?" "Seven times," said he. Then understood his master well what were the seven crowns—that they were the seven kinds of joy which his disciple had merited each time that he rejected the suggestions of the fiend, and denied himself.

Even so, dear sisters, in the wrestling with temptation, ariseth the gain, "No one shall be crowned," saith St. Paul, "except he who fights vigorously and faithfully" against the world, and against himself, and against the wicked one of hell. She fighteth faithfully who standeth firm, howsoever she is attacked by these three adversaries, and especially by the flesh, of what kind soever may be the desire; and the more violent it is, fighteth against it the more resolutely; and refuseth to consent to it, though with reluctant heart, however strongly it may incite her. She who doth thus is a follower of Jesus Christ: for

she doth as he did, when he hanged on the cross; that is, he tasted the bitter drink, and immediately withdrew himself, and would not drink it, though he was thirsty. She is with God on his cross who doth so, although she thirsteth in the desire, and the devil offers her his sweet drink. Understand, however, and consider that there is gall under it; and, though it be sweet for a while, it is better to suffer thirst than to be poisoned. Let the desire pass over, and you will be glad. While itching lasts, it seems an agreeable thing to rub; but afterwards it is felt painfully to smart. Alas! many a one, on account of great heat, is so very thirsty that while she drinketh the drink, however bitter it be, she never feeleth it, but swalloweth it greedily, and taketh no heed. And when it is all over, then she spitteth and shaketh her head, and begins to beat her breast, and to be grieved and sorrowful; but it is then too late. Notwithstanding, after sin, penitence is good: the best thing, then, is to vomit it out immediately in confession to the priest. For, if you leave it within, it will cause death. Wherefore, my dear sisters, be cautious beforehand; and according to the comforts which are here written, seek these remedies against all temptations.

Against all, and especially against carnal temptations,

the medicines and remedies are, under God's grace, holy meditations, inward, incessant, and anxious prayers, and strong faith, and reading, fasting, and watching, and bodily labour, and comfort from others, spoken to thee in the hour of temptation, and humility, patience, and openness of heart, and all virtues, are weapons in this fight, and singleness of love above all others. He who throweth away his weapons desires to be wounded.

Holy meditations are comprehended in a verse that was long since taught you, my dear sisters :—

"Think oft, with sorrow of heart, of thy sins.
Think also of the pains of hell, and of the joys of heaven.
Think also of thine own death, and of the cross of Christ.
Have oft in thy mind the fearful doom of the judgment day.
And think how false this world is, and what are its rewards.
Think also what thou owest God for his goodness."

It would require a long while to explain fully every one of these words. But, if I hasten quickly onward, tarry ye the longer. I say one word in regard to your sins : that when ye think of the pains of hell and the joys of heaven, ye must understand that God designed to exhibit them, in some manner, to men in this world, by worldly pains and worldly joys ; and he shewed them as it were a shadow—for the likeness to

them is no greater. Ye are above the sea of this world, upon the bridge of heaven. See that ye be not like the horse that is shy, and blencheth at a shadow upon the high bridge, and falleth down into the water from the high bridge. They are, indeed, too shy who flee through fear of a picture that seemeth to them ghastly and terrible to behold. All pain and pleasure in this world is only like a shadow—it is all only as a picture.

Not only holy meditations, as of our Lord, and all his works, and his words; of the dear lady, and all his saints; but other reflections also have sometimes helped in innumerable temptations—in four kinds especially—when assailed with carnal temptations—fearful and wonderful, joyful and sorrowful thoughts, which arise spontaneously in the heart; as, to think what thou wouldest do if thou sawest the devil of hell stand openly before thee and gape widely upon thee, as he doth secretly in temptations: or if some one cried out loudly, fire! fire! the church is in flames! or if thou heardest thieves break through thy walls. These, and other like fearful thoughts. Wonderful and joyful—as if thou sawest Jesus Christ, and heard him ask thee what were dearest to thee after thy salvation, and that of thy dearest friends,

of the things of this life, and bade thee choose, upon the condition of thy resisting temptation; or, if thou actually sawest, when under temptation, all that are in heaven, and all that are in hell, beholding thee alone; or, if any one came and told thee that a man very dear to thee were elected pope by some miracle, as by a voice from heaven; and other things of this kind. Wonderful and sorrowful—as if thou wert told that some one very dear to thee were suddenly drowned or murdered; or that thy sisters were burned to death in their house. Such thoughts, in carnal souls, often draw away carnal temptations, sooner than some of the former.

Inward, unintermitted, and fervent prayers soon obtain succour and help from our Lord against carnal temptations; and, be they ever so rudely fervent, or so coarse, the devil of hell is much afraid of them. For, besides that they quickly draw down assistance, and the hand of God from heaven against him, they do him harm of two kinds: they bind and they burn him. Behold! here is proof of both. Pupplius, a holy man, was in prayer, and the fiend came flying high above him through the air toward the west end of the world, by the command of the Emperor Julian, and was bound fast by the holy man's prayers, which

overtook him as they mounted up toward heaven, so that he could not proceed hither nor thither for full ten days. Have ye not also this of the devil Ruffinus, Belial's brother, in our English book of St. Margaret? And the other devil of which we read that he cried loudly to St. Bartholomew, who was much in prayer, and said, "Woe am I, Bartholomew, for thy prayers burn me!" He who can, through God's grace, shed tears in his prayers, may obtain of God whatever he desires. For so we read, "Devout prayers soften and appease our Lord; but tears constrain him." Prayers anoint him with sweet blandishment; but tears goad him, and never give him peace nor rest, until he grant them all that they ask. When it happens that towns or castles are stormed, those that are within pour out scalding water, and thus defend the walls. Even so do ye. As often as the foe stormeth your castle and the soul-town, with your inward prayers cast out upon him scalding tears, that David may say of thee, "Thou hast scalded the head of the dragon with boiling water;" that is, with hot tears. Wherever this water is, the fiend never fails to run away, lest he should be scalded. Again, another example: The castle that hath a deep ditch around it, if there be water in the ditch, the

castle is secure against its enemies. Castle: that is, every good man on whom the fiend maketh war. But if ye have the deep ditch of deep humility, and the water of tears in it, ye are a strong castle. The warrior of hell may besiege you long, and lose all his labour. Again, it is said, and it is true, a great wind is laid with a little rain; and the sun thereafter shineth the brighter. Even so, a great temptation, which is the devil's storm, is laid with a soft rain of a few tears, and the true sun, which is Jesus Christ, shineth thereafter brighter to the soul. Such is the benefit of tears, with inward prayers. And, if ye rightly understand it, I have here mentioned four important effects of them, for which they are greatly to be loved. In all your necessities send quickly these four messengers toward heaven. For, as Solomon saith, "The humble man's prayers pierce through the clouds." And, to the same effect St. Austin saith, "O great is the force of sincere and pure prayer, which flieth up and cometh into the presence of Almighty God, and doth the errand so well, that God commandeth all that she saith to be written in the book of life." And St. Bernard beareth witness and saith that our Lord retains her with himself, and sends down his angel to do all

that she asketh. Concerning prayers I will here say no more.

Steadfast faith putteth the devil to flight immediately: St. James confirmeth this, and saith, "Only stand firm against the fiend, and he betaketh himself to flight." Stand firm: through what strength? St. Peter teacheth, "Stand only against him with strong faith." Be confident of God's assistance, and learn to know how weak is he that hath no power over us but through ourselves. He can only shew thee some of his counterfeit wares, and wheedle or threaten to induce men to buy them; and whichever of these he doth, mock ye and despise and laugh the old ape to utter scorn, through true faith; and he will account himself defeated, and betake himself to flight quickly. "All the holy saints by faith overcame the power of the devil," which is merely sin. For he hath power in none but through sin only. Now take good heed how all the seven deadly sins may be driven away through steadfast faith. First, now, of Pride.

Who is there that thinks himself great, and is proud, when he beholds how little the great Lord made himself within the womb of a poor virgin? And who is envious that beholds, with eyes of faith, how Jesus Christ, not for his own good, acted, and spoke, and

suffered all that he suffered? The envious do not like that others should partake of their good things; and the Almighty, even after all that he suffered, went down into hell to seek associates, and to divide with them the good things that he had! See, now, how different are the envious from our Lord! The anchoress who refused to lend a book to another had turned away her eyes of faith very far from him!

Who is there that keeps wrath in his heart, who considers that God came down to the earth to make threefold peace: between man and man, between God and man, between man and angels? And, after his resurrection, when he came and shewed himself to his beloved disciples, this was his salutation, "Peace be among you!" Take good heed now to this: when a dear friend goes away from another, he wishes the last words that he speaks to be well observed. Our Lord's last words, when he ascended up to heaven and left his dear friends in a strange land, were of sweet love and peace, that is, "Peace I send among you, and peace I leave with you." This was his token of love that he left and gave them at his departure. Now observe diligently, out of his precious love, what kind of mark he placed upon his elect, when he ascended into heaven. "By this ye shall know," quoth

he, " that ye are my disciples, if sweet love and peace is ever between you." May God know this—and he doth know it—I would rather that ye were all leprous than that ye were envious, or cruel and spiteful. For Jesus Christ is all love, and in love he abideth and hath his dwelling : " In peace is God's place, and wherever there is peace and love, there he bringeth to nought all the power of the devil ; there," he saith, " he breaketh his bow ; " that is, secret temptations, which he shooteth from a distance ; " and his sword also," which is temptations that cut close and keen. Now attend diligently and learn by many examples, how good a thing is agreement of affection and unity of heart. For there is nothing under the sun that ye have, which is dearer to me, nor so dear. Do ye not well know that when men fight in powerful armies, they who hold themselves firmly together can in no wise be routed and overcome. It is just so in the spiritual fight against the devil. All his endeavour is to disunite hearts, and to take away love, which keepeth men together. For when love fails, then are they separated ; and the devil immediately putteth himself between them, and slayeth on every side. Dumb beasts have the wariness that, when they are attacked by a wolf, or a lion, the whole flock crowd

closely together and make of themselves a shield to each other, and are secure the while; and if any unlucky creature goeth out of the flock, it is quickly worried. The third example is, that when a man goeth alone in a slippery path, he soon slides and falls; and when many go together and every one has hold of another's hand, if any of them begin to slide, the next one pulls him up before he quite fall; and, if they grow weary, every one is supported by another. (Temptation is sliding; and by wearying is meant the vices which are already mentioned under sloth.) This is what St. Gregory saith, "When we unite together in prayer, we are like persons walking on slippery ground, who hold each other by the hand for mutual support." In like manner, in the strong wind, or in the rapid waters, they that must wade over, if they are many, hold each other's hand, and if any one is separated, he is soon swept away, and perisheth quickly. We know too well that the way of this world is slippery, and that the wind and the streams are strong. Much need is there that every one should hold by the others with assiduous prayers; and with love hold each others' hands. For, as Solomon saith, "Woe to him that is alone, for when he falleth, he hath none to lift him up." He is not alone who hath God for his companion,

and that is every one who hath true love in his heart.

The seventh example is this, if ye count right. Dust and grit, as ye see, when the particles are separated, and do not adhere to one another, a little puff of wind may utterly drive it away and disperse it; when it lies in a clod sticking fast together, then it lieth quite still. A handful of rods are difficult to break when they are together, but each one separately is easily broken. A tree that is about to fall stands fast when it is under-propped by another tree: but separate either from the other, and they both fall Now ye have nine examples to this effect, in things external. Take example then, how good a thing is unity of heart, and agreement of affections, which keeps the good united, that none may perish. And he who wishes thus to have a right faith will consider attentively, and understand Jesus Christ's precious words and works, which were done in love and kindness. Above all, I would have anchoresses to learn well the doctrine of this instruction. For many, more is the harm, are like Samson's foxes, that had their faces every one turned away from each other, and were tied fast by the tails, as we are told in Judges. And in every one's tail, a brand burning. Of these foxes I

spoke long before, but not in this wise. Take good heed what this meaneth. We turn our faces gladly toward the thing that we love, and away from the thing that we hate. Those have, therefore, their faces turned away from each other, when none loveth another. But they are together by the tails, and have in them the devil's brand; that is, the fire of lust. In another sense, tail signifieth end. In their end they shall be bound together, as Samson's foxes were by their tails, and brands put therein; that is, hell-fire.

According to what has now been said, my dear sisters, see that your dear faces be always turned to each other with kind affection, a cheerful countenance, and gentle courtesy; that ye be always with unity of heart, and of one will, united together, as it is written of our Lord's beloved disciples: "The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul." While ye remain united, the fiend may frighten you, if he is permitted, but not by any means harm you That he knows full well, and therefore he is busy, days and nights, to separate you with anger or with base envy; and he sends a man or woman who tells to thee, and of thee, some whispered rumour which a sister ought not to report of a sister. I forbid that any of you should believe this devil's messenger.

But see that every one of you have certain knowledge when she speaketh in the evil man's tongue. Nevertheless, let every one of you, by a trusty messenger, warn each other sweetly and affectionately, as her dear sister, of any thing that she doth wrong, if she know it with certainty, and cause the person who beareth the message repeat it often in her presence before she go out, in the manner she is going to report it, that she may not report it otherwise, nor patch any thing more upon it: for a small clout may greatly disfigure a large whole garment. Let her who receiveth this kind and salutary admonition from her sister gratefully thank her, and say with the Psalmist, "Let the righteous smite me in mercy; and let him reprove me: but let not the oil of the sinner anoint my head." And again, with Solomon, "Better are the wounds of a friend than the deceitful kisses of an enemy." If she loved me not she would not, in pity, warn me. Dearer to me are her wounds than flattering kisses. Always answer thus: and if it is otherwise than the other believeth, send her word of it again kindly and courteously; and let the other readily believe it. For this I desire likewise, that each of you believe one another as herself. And if the fiend blow up any anger or resentment between

you—which may Jesus Christ forbid—until it is appeased, none ought to receive God's flesh and his blood; let no one be so insane, nor in any way even to behold it, nor to look with anger toward him who came down from heaven to man on earth to make threefold peace, as aforesaid. But let each of them send word to the other, that she hath humbly asked her forgiveness, as if she were present. And she who thus first gains the love of the other, and procures peace, and taketh the blame upon herself, although the other may be more in fault, she shall be my beloved and dear sister. For she is indeed a child of God. He himself saith, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." Thus pride, and hatred, and anger are banished from every place where there is sincere love and true faith in the merciful works and gracious words of God. Let us now proceed in order to the other vices.

Of Sloth.

Who can be, for shame, slothful, and sluggish, and slow, that considers how active and diligent our Lord was on earth? and after all his other labours, how, in the eventide of his life, he finished his painful task

on the hard cross? Other men take rest and retire into their chamber from the light, and hide themselves when they are let blood on the vein of an arm. But He, on the hill of Calvary, went up still higher upon the cross; and no man ever underwent such great and severe toil as he did that day when he bled, in five places, streams from full broad and deep wounds, besides the great veins that bled in his head, under the crown of thorns; and besides the woeful gashes of the dreadful scourges, not only on his legs, but over all his dear body. His early resurrection from death to life is very evidently against the indolent and the sleepy.

Of Covetousness.

Against covetousness is his great poverty, which increased upon him continually, more and more. For, at first, when he was born, he who created the earth found not on earth so much space as his little body might be laid upon. For, so narrow was the place that his mother and Joseph sat with difficulty thereon; and so they laid Him up on high in a manger wrapped about with clouts, as the gospel saith, "wrapped him in swaddling clothes." So finely was He, the heavenly Creator, clothed: he that clothed

the sun. Afterwards, the poor lady of heaven fostered and fed him with her little milk, such as a maiden must have had. This was great poverty: but more came thereafter. For he had yet, at least, food, such as fell to him; and, instead of the inn, his cradle lodged him. Afterwards, as he himself complained, he "had not where he might rest his head." Thus was he poor, as to lodging. In regard to meat, he was in such want that when he had preached in the city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday the whole day, and night was drawing nigh, he looked all around him, it is said in the Gospel, if any one would invite him to food or to lodging, and there was none. And so he went out of the great city into Bethany, to the house of Mary and Martha. And once, as he went with his disciples on the way, they broke off the ears of corn by the way, and rubbed out the corn between their hands and ate for hunger; and were, moreover, much blamed for this. But the greatest poverty of all came afterwards. For he was stripped stark naked upon the cross. When he complained of thirst, he might not have water. But the most amazing thing was that, of all the broad earth, he was not allowed a little dust on which to die. The cross had one foot or little more; and that was also to increase his sufferings. When

the Ruler of the World voluntarily became thus poor, he is an unbeliever who loveth, and coveteth too much, the riches and the pleasures of this world.

Of Gluttony.

Against gluttony is the poor pittance which he had on the cross. Two sorts of men have need to eat and to drink well—men who labour, and men who have been let blood. The very same day that he both laboured hard, and was let blood, as I said before, his pittance on the cross was only a spunge of gall. Consider, now, if any one reflects well on this, would she be dissatisfied with the mistrum, or the scanty meal of unsavoury food, or with the poor pittance ?

Of Incontinence.

Against lechery is his being born into the world of the pure virgin, and the whole of his pure life which he, and all who followed him, led on earth. Thus behold the articles, which are, so to speak, the very joints of our belief concerning the human nature of Christ. God knows her who deeply considers them, and fights against the enemy who tempts us with those seven deadly sins. Wherefore, saith St. Peter,

"Arm yourselves with thinking upon Jesus Christ, who suffered in our flesh." And St. Paul saith, "Think, think, when ye fight in the battle against the devil, how our Lord denied his fleshly will, and so deny yours." "Ye have not yet resisted to the shedding of your blood;" as he did of His for you, against himself, inasmuch as he was man in our nature. And yet ye have with you, night and day, the same blood and the same blessed body that came of the maiden and died on the cross, there is only a wall intervening; and every day he cometh forth and sheweth himself to you fleshly and bodily in the mass —shrouded indeed in another substance, under the form of bread. For, in his own form, our eyes could not bear the bright vision. And he sheweth himself to you thus; as if he said, "Behold! I am here: what would ye? Tell me what you greatly desire; of what you are in want. Complain to me of your distress: and if the army of the fiend, which is his temptations, strongly assail you, answer him and say, 'We are encamped by the stone of help: and the Philistines are come to Aphec.'" Yea, Lord! it is no wonder. We are encamped here beside thee, who art the stone of help, and tower of true safety, and castle of strength, and the devil's army is more

enraged against us than against any other. This I take from the Book of Kings. For there we are told how the people of Israel came and encamped beside the stone of help; and the Philistines came into Aphec. Philistines, that is, enemies. Aphec—in Hebrew it signifieth "new madness." It is truly so. When a man encampeth beside our Lord, then first the devils begin to rage: and here we are told that the Israelites soon turned their backs, and four thousand of them were miserably slain in the fight. Never turn ye your back, my dear sisters, but withstand the fiend's army among the foremost, as has been said before, with strong faith; and with the good Jehoshaphat, send prayers quickly, as your messenger, to the Prince of Heaven for succour: The Book of Chronicles: "In us there is not, dear Lord, so much strength that we could withstand this devil's army that is so strong against us. But, when we are thus circumstanced, and beset with such a force, and that also we know not of ourselves what counsel to follow, this alone remains for us—to lift up our eyes and our hands to thee." O merciful Lord, do thou send us succour; do thou put our foes to flight; for to thee we thus look, with the good Jehoshaphat. When God cometh before you, and asketh what you

desire, and at every time when ye have need, declare it thus affectionately to his gracious ears. And, if he do not soon hear you, cry louder, and more importunately, and threaten that ye will yield up the castle unless he send you help the sooner and hasten the more. But do ye know how our Lord answered Jehoshaphat the good? Lo! thus; in this manner, "Be not afraid," etc. Thus he answereth you when ye call for help. "Be not afraid," he saith, "fear ye them not, though they be strong and many. The battle is mine and not yours. Only stand firmly, and ye shall have my succour. Have only steadfast faith in me and ye shall be safe." Now, observe, what a powerful help is steadfast and firm faith. For all the help that God promises—the strength to stand nobly—consists entirely in this alone. Firm faith maketh you to stand upright; and nothing is more hateful to the devil. Therefore this is his saying and his expression in Isaiah, "Bow down, that I may pass over thee." She boweth herself who inclineth her heart to his tempting. For, while she stands upright, he may neither back her nor ride her. Look! how the traitor saith, "Bow thee down, and let me up. I do not wish to ride long. But I will go immediately away over." He lieth, saith St. Bernard;

believe thou not the traitor. "He will not," saith he, "go over, but will sit full fast." Nevertheless, there was one who believed him, and thought that he would soon dismount, as he always promised. "Do it," saith he, "this once, and make confession of it on the morrow. Bow down thine heart; let me up, and throw me off with confession, if I should, perhaps, wish to ride too long." There was one, as I said before, who believed him, and let him up, and he rode her both day and night, full twenty years and more; that is, she committed one particular sin, on the same night, through his instigation, and thought that she would, on the morrow, make confession of it; but she committed it again and again, and fell into such an evil habit that she lay and rotted in it so long, as I before said. And, if it had not been a miracle that puffed down the devil that sat on her so fast, she had toppled with him, both horse and burden, down into the depth of hell. Wherefore, my dear sisters, hold yourselves always invariably upright in true faith. Believe firmly that all the power of the devil melteth away through the grace of the holy sacrament, which ye see elevated above all, as oft as the priest saith mass, and consecrateth that Virgin's child, Jesus, the Son of God, who sometimes descendeth

bodily to your inn, and humbly taketh his lodging within you. God knoweth, she is too weak, and too evil-hearted, who, with the aid of such a guest, fighteth not bravely. Ye ought to believe truly that all that the holy church readeth and singeth, and all her sacraments, give you spiritual strength, but none so much as this; for it bringeth to nought all the wiles of the devil; not only his forceful and violent assaults, but his powerful stratagems, his cunning sorceries, and all his deceits; as illusory dreams, false appearances, dreadful alarms, and flattering and deceitful counsels, as if the thing to be done were good and for the honour of God; for that is his wicked artifice, which, as I said before, holy men most dread, and with which he hath terribly beguiled many holy men. When he cannot bring thee to any open wickedness, he incites thee to something which appears good. He saith, "Thou shouldest be more indulgent, and let thy mind be quiet. Thou oughtest not to disturb nor vex thine heart, nor rouse it to anger." He saith this, signifying that thou shouldest not correct nor chastise thy servant for her fault; and thus he leads thee into carelessness, instead of mildness. And, at another time, directly contrary to this he saith, "Permit not thyself to forgive thy servant any fault; if thou

wishest her to fear thee, keep her strictly. Justice," saith he, " must be very strict ; " and thus he coloureth cruelty with the hue of justice. One may be too severely just. Skilful prudence is better than rude force. When thou hast watched long, and shouldst now go to sleep, he saith, " It would now be meritorious to watch, since watching is painful to thee. Say yet," saith he, " one Nocturn." Why doth he say this ? Only that thou shouldst sleep afterwards, when it might be time for thee to watch. Again, he persuadeth quite the contrary ; and if thou art well able to watch, he bringeth drowsiness upon thee, or suggesteth such thoughts as these : " Wisdom is the best thing : I will go to sleep and arise again presently, and do more quickly than now what I ought now to do,"—and thus, perhaps, it often happens that thou dost it not in the right time. On this subject I spoke before at large. In temptations of this kind there is none so wise and guarded, unless God defend him, that is not sometimes deceived. But this sublime sacrament, with steadfast faith, more than anything else, unmasks his artifices, and breaketh his strongholds. Truly, dear sisters, when ye perceive him nigh you, while ye have steadfast faith, ye will only laugh him to scorn, because he is such an old fool, who comes to

increase his own punishment, and plait a crown for you. As soon as he seeth you valiant and bold in the service of God, and in his grace, his power melteth away, and quickly he takes to flight. But, if he should perceive that your faith fails, so that it appears to you that ye might be quite led astray if ye were, at that hour, strongly tempted, then is your strength weakened, and his power increaseth.

We read in the Book of Kings that Ish-bosheth lay and slept, and had set a woman to be keeper of the gate, who winnowed wheat. And the sons of Rechab, Remmon and Baanah, came and found that the woman had left off her winnowing and fallen asleep ; and they went in and slew the unhappy Ish-bosheth, who guarded himself so ill. It is of importance that the meaning of this be well understood. Ish-bosheth, in Hebrew, signifieth " a man bewildered " in English. And is not he verily bewildered and out of his wits who, in the midst of his enemies, lieth down to sleep ? The gate-ward—that is, reason—which ought to winnow the wheat and separate the refuse and the chaff from the clean grain, that is, by diligent carefulness to separate the good from the bad, and place the wheat in the granary, and blow always away the devil's chaff, which is fit for nothing but to smoulder

in hell. But the stupid Ish-bosheth, behold how foolishly he acted. He appointed a woman to be gate-ward, that is, a feeble warden. Alas! how many do the like! Woman is reason, that is, the understanding when it grows feeble, which ought to be manly, steady, and earnest in true faith. This gate-ward layeth herself down to sleep, as soon as we begin to consent to sin, and permit the desire to go inward, and the fondness to increase. When the sons of Rechab, which are the children of hell, find such an unwatchful and indolent gate-ward, they go in and slay Ish-bosheth, that is, the bewildered spirit, which in a sleepy carelessness neglecteth himself. It is not to be forgotten that, as Holy Scripture informs us, they stabbed Ish-bosheth through the groin. Upon this St. Gregory remarks, "The fiend stabs through the groin when the fond desire of lechery perforates the heart:" and this is done only in the sleep of carelessness and sloth, as St. Gregory sheweth, "When the old enemy seeth that our reason is asleep, he immediately draweth nigh to her, and falleth into conversation with her; 'Dost thou remember,' saith he, 'how this or that one spoke of the lust of the flesh?'" And thus the old deceiver speaks to her heart words that she heard long ago indecently

spoken ; or of some sight that she saw ; or of her own uncleanness which she formerly wrought. All this he places before the eyes of her heart, that he may corrupt her with the remembrance of old sins, when he cannot with new. And thus he often bringeth again into the infatuated soul, through desire, the same sins which through penitential contrition were long since amended, so that she may weep and lament, as one in sorrow, with the Psalmist, "Alas! my wounds that were so well healed are gathering new matter," and begin again to fester. A healed wound begins to fester when the sins that were formerly amended come again, with desire, into the memory, and slay the unwary soul. Gregorius saith, Ishbosheth would not have fallen by a sudden death if he had not placed a woman, that is, a timid warder, at the door of his mind. All this mishap came through the gate-ward's sleep. That which is not wary and watchful is not manly but womanly—easy to overcome, whether it be man or woman. All our strength, then, is according to our faith, and according to our confidence in God's help, which is ever nigh, except our faith give way, as I said before. Faith weakeneth the enemy and putteth him to flight immediately. Wherefore, be always as bold as a lion against him,

with true faith ; and especially in that temptation by which Ish-bosheth died, namely, the lust of the flesh. Behold how you may know that he is cowardly and weak, when he smites in this direction. Is not he a cowardly champion who strikes at the feet ? who seeks to smite his antagonist so low ? Now the lust of the flesh is a foot wound, as was said long before ; and this is the reason of it : in like manner as our feet carry us, so our lusts often carry us to the object of our desires. Now then, although the enemy wound thee in the feet, that is to say, tempt thee with carnal pleasures, be not too much afraid for so low a wound, unless it should swell greatly, through the mind's consent, with too much delight, up toward the heart ; and then, drink the antidote, and drive the swelling away from the heart ; that is to say, think of the bitter pains that God suffered on the cross, and the swelling will abate. Pride, envy, wrath, anxiety about worldly things, listless indolence, and covetousness of wealth,—these are the wounds of the heart, and that which emanates from them immediately giveth a death blow, unless it be remedied. When the enemy smiteth in this direction, then is he truly to be feared, and not for foot wounds.

I. The remedy of pride is humility ; of envy, love

to one another; of wrath, patience; of indolence, reading, and various kinds of work, and spiritual consolation; the remedy of covetousness is contempt of earthly things; of avarice, liberality. Now, concerning the first. First of all, if thou wilt be humble, reflect always on your want of holiness and spiritual-mindedness. Consider what thou hast of thyself. Thou art of two parts—of body and soul, and in each are two things which may greatly humble thee, if thou rightly apprehendest them. In thy body is uncleanness and infirmity. Now, there cometh out of a vessel such things as it contains. What cometh out of the vessel of thy flesh? Doth the smell of spices or of sweet balsam come thereof? God knoweth. Do dry twigs often bear grapes? And do briars bear roses, and berries, and flowers? Man, what fruit doth thy flesh bear in all its apertures? Amidst the greatest ornament of thy face; that is, the fairest part between the taste of mouth and smell of nose, hast thou not two holes, as if they were two privy holes? Art thou not formed of foul slime? Art thou not always full of uncleanness? Shalt thou not be food for worms? Even now, a fly may hurt thee and cause thee to shrink. Truly thou mayest easily be proud! "Thou art," saith the philosopher, "of slimy origin,

a vessel of filth, food for worms." Look at the holy men of old; how they fasted, and how they watched; how great were the sufferings and labours they underwent; and thus thou mightest know thine own weak infirmity. But knowest thou what distorteth the weak eyes of a man who has climbed up high? That he looks downward. Augustin saith, "As the sight of an inferior is an incentive to pride, so that of a superior is a warning to humility." For, as he who looks at those who are of humble station seemeth to himself to be of high station, so do thou look always upward to heavenly men, who have climbed on high, and then thou shalt see how low thou standest. To fast a week on bread and water, or to watch three nights together, how would it enfeeble thy bodily strength? Thus, look at these two things in thy body, uncleanness and weakness: in thy soul, other two, sin and ignorance; that is, folly and want of judgment; for often that which thou thinkest to be good is evil and soul-murder. Behold with wet eyes thy shameful sins. Dread continually thy weak nature, which is easily overcome, and say, with the holy man who began to weep and said, when he was told that one of his companions had fallen with a woman into carnal uncleanness, "He to-day, I to-morrow:" as

if he had said, I am of the same infirm nature as he is, and the very same may happen to me, unless God sustain me. Lo! thus, the holy man had no overweening contempt of the other man that was fallen into sin, but wept his mishap, and dreaded that the very same might befall himself. In this manner, keep your heart humble and meek. St. Bernard says, "As pride is a desire of worship, so, on the contrary, humility is the rejecting of worship," and the love of moderate commendation and of meekness. This virtue is the mother of all virtues, and giveth birth to them all. He who tries, without this, to acquire excellent virtues "beareth dust in the wind," as St. Gregory testifieth. This virtue alone is saved: this alone evadeth the snares of the devil of hell, as our Lord said to St. Antony, who saw all the world full of the devil's hidden traps. "Ah, Lord!" quoth he, "who may guard himself against these so that he is not caught with some of them?" "Only the humble," quoth our Lord. So little a thing is humility, and so small, that no snare may hold it fast. And here is a very wonderful thing: for, though it make itself so little, and so meek, and so small, yet it is the strongest thing of all, inasmuch as all spiritual strength comes from it. St. Cassiodore sheweth this, "All courage is from

humility." And Solomon telleth the reason of it. Where there is humility there, saith he, is Jesus Christ; that is, his Father's wisdom and his Father's strength. Now it is no wonder, then, that there is strength where he is, through in-dwelling grace. Through the strength of humility he overcame the giant of hell. The wary wrestler carefully observes what stratagem his mate, with whom he wrestles, is ignorant of; for with that particular stratagem he may overthrow him unawares. Thus did our Lord. He saw how many the fierce wrestler of hell caught up on his hip, and threw, with the cast of the thigh, into lechery, which rules in the loins. He heaved up many, and turned round with them, and swung them through pride down into the depth of hell. Oh! thought our Lord when he beheld all this, "I shall practise upon thee a sleight that thou never knewest nor ever could know"—the sleight of humility, which is the falling stratagem. And he fell from heaven to the earth, and stretched himself in such a manner on the earth, that the fiend thought that he was all earthly; and he was outwitted by that stratagem, and is still every day, by humble men and women who are well skilled in it. On the other hand, as Job saith, he may not yet for pride but look high. "His eyes behold all

high things." Holy men who think little of themselves and live humbly are out of his sight. The wild boar cannot stoop to smite him who falleth down, and through meek humility stretcheth himself on the ground: he is quite secure from his tusks. This is not contrary to that which I said before, that we ought always to stand against the devil. For this standing is faithful confidence of firm belief in God's power; and this falling is humble consciousness of thine own weakness, and of thine own want of strength; nor can any man so stand except he thus fall; that is, except he think himself of small account and unworthy, and look always at his blackness and not at his fairness, because the fairness dazzles the eyes. Humility can never be sufficiently commended, for it was the lesson which our Lord most earnestly taught all his elect, both by word and work, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." In this virtue he poureth not merely drop by drop, but he poureth in a flowing stream, the fountains of his grace; as the Psalmist saith, "In the dales thou makest fountains to well up." But a heart inflated, and swollen, and lifted up as a hill—such a heart retains none of the dew of God's grace. A bladder inflated full of wind diveth not into those deep waters; but the pricking of a needle

letteth out all the wind. In like manner a slight stitch or a slight pain maketh one understand how worthless is pride, and how stupid a thing is vanity.

II. The remedy for envy, I said, was love to one another, and doing them good; and good will, where the ability to do is wanting. So great efficacy hath love and good will, that it maketh the good which it doth to another our own, as well as his. Only love his good; be well pleased and glad of it, and thus thou turnest it to thyself, and makest it thine own. St. Gregory sheweth this: "If thou lovest the good of another, thou makest it thine own." If thou hast envy of another's good, thou poisonest thyself with balsam and woundest thyself with salve. Thy salve it is—if thou lovest it—against the wounds of the soul; and thy strength against the fiend is all the good that another doeth, if thou art well pleased with it. I firmly believe that neither carnal nor spiritual temptation shall ever master thee if thou art kind-hearted, and humble, and meek, and lovest so sincerely all men and women, and especially anchoresses, thy dear sisters, that thou art as sorry for their evil, and glad of their good, as of thine own: desire that all who love thee love them as well as thee, and comfort them as well as thee. If thou hast a knife or a gar-

ment, food or drink, scroll or book, the holy man's comfort, or any thing that would benefit them, desire that thou hadst it not, provided that they had it. And if any one hath not her heart thus disposed, let her, with sorrowful sighs, cry to our Lord by day and by night, and never give him peace until he, by his grace, have so changed and formed her.

III. The remedy of wrath, I said, was patience, which hath three degrees, high, and higher, and highest of all, and nearest the high heaven. The degree is high if thou sufferest patiently for thy own guilt; higher if thou art not guilty; highest of all if thou sufferest for the good thou hast done. "Nay," saith some bewildered thing, "if I were guilty of it I would never complain." Art thou that sayest so out of thy wits? Wouldst thou rather be Judas's fellow than the companion of Jesus Christ? Both were hanged; but Judas for his guilt, and Jesus without guilt, was hanged on the cross for his great goodness. Of which of the two wouldest thou be the fellow sufferer? Upon this subject much is already written above, as how he that saith or doth thee wrong is thy file: and is not that iron accursed that becometh the blacker and the rougher the oftener and the more it is filed? Gold and silver are purified

from their dross in the fire. If thou gatherest dross therein, it is contrary to nature. "Reprobate silver call ye them." If the chalice could speak, which was molten in the fire, and made to boil vehemently, and then, with much beating and polishing, made into so very beautiful a form for the service of God, would it curse the purifying fire and the hands of its artificer? The whole world is God's smithy, in which he forgeth his elect. Wouldst thou that God had no fire in his smithy, nor bellows, nor hammers? Fire—that is, shame and pain; bellows—that is, they who speak evil of thee; thy hammers—that is, they who do thee harm. Think of this example. Augustine saith, "Why doth the wicked man boast, if my Father make of him a scourge?" When a day of redress is fixed, doth not he greatly affront the judge, who, before the appointed day, breaketh the truce and avengeth himself on thee or on himself? And who does not know well that Doomsday is a day appointed in which to do justice to all men? Meanwhile, keep the truce. Whatever wrong men do thee, the righteous Judge hath appointed a day in which to see justice done between you. Do not thou affront him by despising the vengeance of his judgment, and taking vengeance according to thy own judgment. There are

two things which God hath reserved to himself—worship and vengeance, as Holy Writ sheweth. Whosoever taketh to himself either of these two, robbeth God and reaveth from him. "My glory will I not give to another." Also, "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay." God knoweth! Art thou so enraged against man or woman that, to avenge thyself, thou wilt rob God of his might?

IV. The remedy for indolence is spiritual joy, and the consolation of joyful hope from reading and from holy meditation, or when spoken by the mouth of man. Often, dear sisters, ye ought to pray less, that ye may read more. Reading is good prayer. Reading teacheth how, and for what, we ought to pray; and prayer afterwards obtaineth it. In reading, when the heart feels delight, devotion ariseth, and that is worth many prayers. St. Jerome saith, "Let holy reading be always in thy hand. Sleep may fall upon thee as thou lookest thereon, and the sacred page meet thy drooping face;" and thus long and intently must thou read. Every thing, however, may be overdone. Moderation is always best.

V. Against covetousness. I could wish that others avoided, as ye do, gathering. Too much liberality often breedeth it. Free hearted ye ought to be.

But an anchoress, from other's liberality, hath sometimes been too free of herself. Lechery cometh of gluttony and of carnal ease; for, as St. Gregory saith, "Meat and drink more than enough bringeth forth a threefold progeny; light words, light deeds, and wantonness. Our Lord be thanked, who hath cured you of gluttony, my dear sisters; but carnal desires are never completely extinguished from among the temptations of the flesh. But know this, that there are three degrees therein, as St. Bernard testifieth. The first is cogitation; the second is affection; the third is consent. Cogitations are flying thoughts that do not last; and these, according to St. Bernard, hurt not the soul; but yet, they spit upon her with their black spittle, so that she is not worthy to be embraced or kissed by Jesus Christ, her beloved, who is altogether fair, before she is washen. Such impurity, as it cometh lightly, goeth away lightly with the help of prayer, confession, and all good works. Affection is when the thought goeth inward, and fondness is excited, and the desire increaseth. Then, as was the little spot at first upon the white hood, there groweth a wound, and penetrateth deeply into the soul, according as the desire and the fondness go in further and further. Then there is need to cry, "Lord, heal

me, for I am wounded." "Reuben, thou red thief; thou bloody desire; mayest thou never increase!" Consent, that is, the willingness of the mind when the fondness of the desire is gone so much too far that there is no refusing, if there were a convenient opportunity to commit the action. This is when the heart draweth desire into itself, as a bewildered thing, and begins, as it were, to wink and to permit the fiend to do what he pleases, and layeth herself down and inclineth to him as he bids, and crieth "I yield, I yield," as if about to faint. Then he becometh bold who was at first timid. Then he leapeth near, who was at first at a distance, and bites the bite of death on God's dear spouse. I wis, the bite of death, for his teeth are venomous as the teeth of a mad dog. David, in the Psalms, calleth him dog, "Deliver my soul from the sword, my darling from the power of the dog."

Wherefore, my dear sister, as soon as ever thou perceivest that this dog of hell cometh sneaking with his bloody fleas of corrupt thoughts, lie thou not still, nor yet sit, to see what he will do, or how far he will go; and say not to him in a sleepy manner, "Friend dog, go out hence; what wouldest thou have here?" This enticeth him toward thee. But take up at once

the staff of the cross, at the same time pronouncing the sacred name with thy mouth, with the sign in thy hand, and with thought in thy heart, command him sternly to go out—the foul cur dog; and beat him severely with the staff of the holy rood. Give him hard back strokes; that is to say, rouse up and bestir thyself: lift up your eyes and hands toward heaven, cry for succour, "Haste thee, O God, to deliver me." "Come Holy Ghost." "Let God arise." "Save me, O God, for thy name's sake." "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me." "To thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul." "I have lifted up my eyes." All the Psalms through. And if help cometh not to thee soon, cry louder with fervent heart, "How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever?" And so on through the whole Psalm: the Lord's Prayer, the Belief, the Salutation of the Virgin Mary, with deprecatory prayers in thy own language; and smite your knees down smartly to the earth, and snatch up the rood staff, and swinge him again on every side—the hell hound. That is nothing else than bless thyself all around with the holy sign of the cross. Spit, in contempt and scorn, upon his beard who thus dangleth about thee, and flattereth thee with the fawning of a dog, when, for

so small a price—for the momentary gratification of a desire, he tries to purchase thy soul—God's dear spouse, which he bought with his blood, and with his precious death on the dear cross. Look always at the price that he paid for her; and by that value her, and hold her the dearer; and never sell thou so cheaply, either to his enemy or thine, his beloved spouse that cost him so dear. To make of her the devil's paramour, is sorrow beyond all sorrow. Too depraved, withal, is she, who might, by holding up her three fingers, overcome her foe, and desires it not, through sloth. Hold up, therefore, with true and firm faith thy three fingers, and with the holy rood-staff, which is the cudgel which he loathes most, lay on the devil-dog. Name Jesus often, and invoke the aid of his passion, and implore him by his sufferings, and by his precious blood, and by his death on the cross. Fly into his wounds; creep into them with thy thought. They are all open. He loved us much who permitted such cavities to be made in him, that we might hide ourselves in them. And, with his precious blood, ensanguine thine heart. "Go into the rock," saith the prophet, "and hide thee in the pit which is dug in the earth;" that is, in the wounds of our Lord's flesh, which was as if dug into with the

blunt nails, as he said long before in the Psalter, "They dug my feet and my hands." He did not say, they pierced my feet and my hands, but dug. For, according to this Latin, as our teachers say, the nails were so blunt that they digged his flesh, and broke the bones rather than pierced them, to torment him the sorer. He himself calleth thee toward those wounds. "My dove," saith our Lord, "come and hide thyself in the cavities of my limbs, and in the holes of my side." Great was his affection for the dove for which he made such hiding-places. See now that thou, whom he calleth dove, have the nature of a dove, which is without gall, and come to him boldly, and make his sufferings thy shield, and say with Jeremiah, "Thou shalt give me, O Lord, a heart-shield against the enemy; which is thy laborious sufferings." That they were laborious, he shewed manifestly enough, when he sweated, as it were drops, the sweat of blood, that ran down to the earth. A shield should be held up, in battle, above the head or against the breast, and not dragged behind thee; and, in like manner, if thou wish that the holy rood-staff should be thy shield, and that the Lord's painful sufferings should foil the devil's weapons, drag it not after thee, but lift it up on high above the head of thy

heart, in the eyes of thy breast. Hold it up against the enemy, and shew it him distinctly. The mere sight of it putteth him to flight; for it both terrifieth him and shameth him to distraction, since the time when our Lord therewith baffled his crafty wiles, and his proud strength. If thou, through thy negligence, defendest thyself at first feebly, and givest the enemy entrance too far in the beginning, so that thou mayest not be able to drive him back again because of thy great weakness, but art so far overcome that thou canst not hold this shield upon thy heart, nor shelter thyself under it from the devil's arrows, take, at last, St. Benedict's remedy, though it need not be excessively strong as his was, who, from the wallowing, on back, and side, and belly, ran all over with gory blood: but, at least, when the temptation is strongest, give thyself a smart flagellation, and draw, as he did, the sweet inclination into smarting. If thou dost not so, but defendest thyself in a sleepy manner, he will advance upon thee too far, before thou art in the least aware, and bring thee from foul thoughts to the desire of foul sin; and so he bringeth thee completely to give thy mind's consent, which is mortal sin, without the deed; and so is likewise the pleasure of the stinging desire, without consenting to its effect,

so long as it may last, when the reason no longer contendeth against it. For the delight in it must never be judged to be wilful though it continue, as long as the reason strives against it, and refuses its consent. Wherefore, dear sisters, as our Lord taught thee, trample upon the serpent's head, that is, the beginning of his temptation. " Blessed is she," saith David, " who restraineth herself at first, and breaketh against the stone the first emotions when the flesh ariseth, while she is young." Our Lord is called a stone because of his faithfulness. And also in the Canticles, " Take us the little foxes that spoil the vines ; " these are the first enticements which are felt, which destroy the vineyards, saith our Lord, which are our souls, that need much tilling in order to bear grapes. The devil is of the nature of a bear and of an ass ; for he is strong behind and feeble in the head, that is, in the beginning, and so is the bear and the ass. Never give him entrance, but tap him on the skull, for he is weak as a bear in that part ; and thus hasten him away and hurry him away so shamefully, as soon as thou perceivest him, that he may hold himself as disgraced, and dread the place wherein thou dwellest ; for he is the proudest creature, and shame is most disagreeeable to him.

Thus, dear sister, as soon as ever thou feelest thy heart incline with too much love toward any man, beware immediately of the venom of the serpent, and trample upon his head. The old woman spoke very truly, when with a single straw all her houses caught fire, that "much cometh of little." And now observe how it happeneth: the spark that goeth up, doth not immediately set the house all on fire, but lieth and catcheth more fire, and continueth feeding it, and it groweth from less to more until the whole house blaze forth before we are in the least aware. And the devil bloweth upon it from the time that it first kindleth, and always bloweth a greater blast with his bellows as it increaseth. Understand this from thyself. If any sight that thou seest, or a single word that thou hearest amiss, at all move thee, quench it with the water of tears, and with Jesus Christ's blood, while it is only a spark, before it increase and inflame thee so that thou mayest never be able to quench it; for so it often happens, and it is the just decree of God, that "he who doth not when he may, shall not when he would."

There are many kinds of temptation in this fourth part, and various comforts and manifold remedies.

May our Lord give you grace that they may help you ! The fifth part then shall be of confession, the most necessary of them all, as I promised above. And observe how every part falleth into another, as I said before. Here beginneth the fifth part.

PART V.—Of Confession.

CONCERNING confession. To begin, take notice of two things: first, of what efficacy it is; secondly, of what kind it should be. These are two branches; and each of them is divided: the former into six parts; the other into sixteen. Now this is concerning the former.

Confession hath many powers. I will not, however, speak of them all; but only of six: three against the devil, and three concerning ourselves. Confession confoundeth the devil, and hacketh off his head, and disperseth his forces. Confession washeth us from all our filthiness, and giveth us back all our losses, and maketh us children of God. And each of these divisions hath its own three. Let us now prove all these. The first three are all exemplified in the history of Judith. 1. Judith, that is, confession, as was said before, slew Holofernes, that is, the fiend of hell. Turn back to the place where we spoke of the nature of fowls, which are compared to anchoresses. She

hacked off his head, and then came and shewed it to the priests of the city. Then is the fiend confounded when all his iniquities are disclosed in confession. His head is cut off, and he is slain in the man as soon as ever he is truly sorry for his sins, and hath set his heart on confessing them. 2. But he is not yet confounded while his head is concealed, as Judith did at first, nor until it is shewn; that is, until the mouth in confession put forth the capital sin. And not only the sin, but the whole beginning thereof, and the previous circumstances which brought in the sin, which is the devil's head, which we ought immediately to trample upon, as I said before. "One Hebrew woman hath made confusion in the house of King Nebuchodonosor;" then his army immediately flies, as Judith made that of Holofernes, and his wiles and fraudulent tricks, wherewith he assailed us, all take to flight; and the city which they had besieged is delivered; that is to say, the sinner is delivered. Judas Maccabeus—who stood against him? In like manner, we are told in the Book of Judges, that, after the death of Joshua, when the people asked, "Who should be their leader, and go before them in the army?" our Lord answered and said, "Judah shall go before you: I will deliver

the land of your enemies into his hands." Consider now attentively, what this meaneth. Joshua meaneth health, and Judah confession, the same as Judith. Then is Joshua dead when the health of the soul is lost through any deadly sin. The sinner is the enemy's land, who is our deadly foe, and this land our Lord promises to deliver into Judah's hands. For when he goeth before, behold now, confession is the standard bearer, and beareth here the banner before all God's army, which is good morals. 3. Confession reaveth from the fiend his land, which is the sinful man, and completely defeateth Canaan, the army of the fiend of hell. Judah did it bodily; and confession, which he betokeneth, doth the same spiritually. Now these are the three things that confession doth against the devil. The other three things which it doth to ourselves are those which follow.

1. Confession washeth us from all our defilements: for thus it is written, as a comment upon this, "We will confess to thee, O God, we will confess," etc., and this was figuratively shewn when Judith washed herself, and stripped off the garments of her widowhood, which were a token of sorrow; and there is no sorrow but from sin only. 2. Confession gives us back all the good that we had lost through mortal

sin: it bringeth it all again, and completely restoreth it. Joel saith, "I will restore to you the years that the locust, the canker-worm, and the mildew, and the palmer-worm have eaten." This was figuratively shewn in that Judith clothed herself with holiday garments, and made herself fair without, as confession maketh us within, with all the goodly ornaments which are tokens of joy. And our Lord saith in Zechariah, "They shall be as they were before I had cast them off;" that is, confession shall make the man such as he was before he sinned; as clean, and as fair, and as rich in all the good that appertaineth to the soul. 3. The third thing which confession doth to ourselves is the fruit of the other two, and which completes them both, that is, maketh us children of God. This is represented in the Book of Genesis, when Judah obtained the consent of Jacob to carry Benjamin with him into Egypt. Benjamin signifieth Son of the right hand. Judah, that is, confession; in like manner as Judith; for both have the same meaning in the Hebrew tongue. This spiritual Judah obtained of Jacob his father, that is, our Lord, to be the son of his right hand, and to enjoy, without end, the inheritance of heaven. We have now said how great is the power of confession, and what effects it hath, and

we have mentioned six. Let us now consider attentively what sort of confession that must be which produceth such good effects; and to shew it the better, divide we now this part into sixteen particulars.

Confession shall be accusatory, bitter and sorrowful, full, candid, frequent, speedy, humble, with shame, anxious, hopeful, prudent, true, voluntary, spontaneous, steadfast, and premeditated. These now are, as it were, sixteen particulars, which belong to confession; and we shall say a word of each of them separately in order.

I. Confession shall be accusatory. In confession a man ought to accuse himself, and not defend himself and say, "I did it through the fault of others: I was forced to do it: the devil compelled me to do it." Thus did Eve and Adam defend themselves. Adam through Eve, and Eve through the serpent. The devil cannot compel any man to commit sin, although he instigates him thereto. But he is very well pleased when any one saith that he made him to sin, as though he had power, who really hath none, except through ourselves. But we ought to say, "My own wickedness did it; and willingly and wilfully I yielded to the devil." If thou blamest any thing but thyself for thy sin, thou dost not confess thyself; and if thou

sayest that thy weakness was unable to do otherwise, thou throwest the blame of thy sin upon God, who made thee such that, by thine own account, thou hadst not power to resist. Let us accuse ourselves; for lo! what saith St. Paul? "If we accuse and judge ourselves well here, we shall be freed from accusing at the great judgment." Concerning this St. Anselm saith these terrible words, "On this side will stand accusing sins; on the other, the dreadful judgment seat; above, the angry Judge; beneath, the yawning horrid pit of hell; within, a gnawing conscience; without, a burning world. Scarcely shall the righteous be saved. Where shall the sinner, thus detected, hide himself?" On Doomsday our black sins on the one side shall sternly accuse us of our soul-murder; on the other side stands Justice, with whom there is no pity, dreadful and terrible to behold; above us the angry Judge, for as soft as he is here so hard he is there; and as mild as he is now here so stern he is there; a lamb here and a lion there, as the Prophet testifieth. "The lion shall roar," saith he, "who is he that shall not be afraid?" Here we call him Lamb as oft as we sing, "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world." Now, as I said, we shall see above us the same angry Judge, who is also

the witness, and knows all our guilt; beneath us, yawning wide, the wide throat of hell; within ourselves our own conscience, that is, our mind, reproaching itself with the fire of remorse for sin; without us, all the world blazing in black flame up to the welkin. The unhappy sinner being thus beset, how shall it then stand with him? To which of these four can he turn? There is nothing then but that severe sentence—that awful, and above all terrible sentence, "Go, ye accursed, out of my eye-sight, into the eternal fire that was prepared for the devil and his angels. Ye disobeyed my statutes which I ordained for man, who was appointed to live in toil and in sorrow on earth; and ye shall now, therefore, have the devil's doom, and burn with him in the everlasting fire of hell." Then shall the lost utter such wailing that both heaven and earth may fearfully shudder. Wherefore St. Austin affectionately teacheth us, Let man think of Doomsday, and judge himself here, in this wise: let reason sit as judge upon the judgment seat; let his thought then come forth; let his thoughts bring to his remembrance, accuse him, and charge him with divers sins, "O, good friend, thou didst this, and this, and this, in such a place, and in this manner." Let his conscience acknowledge it,

and bear him witness; "true it is, true it is, this and much more." After this, let Fear come forth, by the judge's command, who sternly orders, "Take him and bind him fast, for he is worthy of death; and bind him so in every limb with which he hath sinned that he may sin with them no more." Fear hath bound him, when he dare not, for fear, make any movement toward sin. Yet is not the judge, that is, reason, satisfied, though he is bound and keeps himself from sin, unless he pay the penalty for the sin he has done; and he calleth forth pain and sorrow, and commands sorrow to scourge him within the heart with sore repentance, so that he sigh and punish the flesh outwardly with fasting, and with other bodily pains. He who thus judgeth himself here, before the great judgment, is blessed and happy. For, as the prophet saith, "Our Lord will not suffer a man to be judged for one thing twice." It is not in God's court as it is in that of the shire, where they who deny well may be acquitted; and the fool who is detected is condemned. Before God it is otherwise: "If thou accusest thyself well here, God will excuse thee there," and clear thee also, at the strict judgment—because thou judgest thyself, as I have taught above.

II. Confession shall be bitter, inasmuch as the sin, at one time, was thought sweet. Judith, which signifieth confession, as I have often remarked, was the daughter of Merari; and Judah, which is also confession, wived with Tamar. Merari and Tamar both signify bitterness in Hebrew. Now, pay earnest attention to the signification. I mention it briefly: bitterness, sorrow, and confession. The one may come from the other, as Judith did from Merari, and both may be joined together, as were Judith and Tamar; for either without the other is worth little or nothing. Pharez and Zarah never bring forth offspring. There are four things that mortal sin has done to him which, if a man reflect, may make him sorrowful, and embitter his heart. Lo, now, this is the first: If a man had lost, in a single hour of the day, his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, and also all his kindred, and if all his friends that he ever had had died suddenly in a single day, would he not be sorrowful and grieved more than all other men, as he well might? God knoweth he may be, without comparison, more sorrowful who, by mortal sin, has slain God within his soul. For he hath not only lost the sweet Father of heaven, and Saint Mary his Mother, or Holy Church—since he

hath nothing more or less from her—and all the angels of heaven, and all the saints, which were formerly as brethren, and sisters, and friends to him. They are dead, as relates to him. He hath slain them all, and is there, where they live for ever, abhorred of them all, as Jeremiah witnesseth, "All they who loved him cried spit on him," and they all hate him. Moreover, all his children, as soon as he sinned mortally, died every one; which are his good works, which are all lost. And, in addition to all this, he is himself completely changed, and from being a child of God is become a child of the devil of hell, frightful to look upon; as God himself saith in the Gospel, "Ye are of your father the devil." Let every one reflect upon his own state in which he is, or was, and he may see wherefore he ought to sigh sore. Therefore Jeremiah saith, "Make bitter moan as a woman doth for her child, that hath but him alone," and seeth him before her suddenly cut off by death. Now the second example which I promised is this: If a man were condemned for a horrid murder to be burned alive, or disgracefully hanged, what would be the state of his heart? Nay, but, thou unhappy sinner! when thou by mortal sin didst murder God's spouse, that is, thy soul—when thou wert condemned to be hanged

on a burning gallows-tree in the everlasting torments of hell—when thou madest a covenant with the devil concerning thy death, and saidest with the lost ones in Isaiah, "We have plighted troth with death, and established a covenant with hell;" for this is the devil's bargain; he giveth thee sin, and thou givest him thy soul, and thy body too, to suffer woe and misery world without end. Now, briefly, the third example. Think how a man who had the whole world under his dominion, and had, by his wickedness, lost it all in one hour, would mourn and be grieved! Then oughtest thou to be a hundred times more grieved, who, by one mortal sin, hast lost the kingdom of heaven, and hast lost our Lord, who is an hundred times—yea, a thousand times, better than all this world—both earth and heaven. "For what concord hath Christ with Belial?" Now again, the fourth example. If the king had given his beloved son in charge to a knight to guard, and enemies took away this child, his ward, so that the child himself made war upon his father along with the enemies, would not the knight be grieved and sorely ashamed? We all are the sons of God, the King of Heaven, who hath given each of us in charge to an angel to guard. Sorry is he, as angels are sorry, when enemies lead us

away, and when we make war against our heavenly Father, by sin. Let us be sorry that we ever should displease such a Father, and disgrace such a guardian who constantly watches over and protects us from invisible unblest spirits, for otherwise we should stand in evil plight. But, when we commit deadly and foul sin, we contemptuously drive him far away, and the devil leapeth in as soon as he is gone from us. Let us hold him nigh us with the sweet smell of good works, and let us put ourselves in his keeping. Christ knoweth that every one of us pay too little honour to so kind a guardian, and feel too little gratitude for his service. For these and many other reasons, a man may bitterly grieve for his sins, and weep full sore; and well it is with him whoso may, for weeping is health to the soul. Our Lord doth to us as men do to a bad debtor; he accepteth less than we owe him, and yet is well satisfied. We owe him blood for blood; and moreover our blood in return for his blood which he shed for us, were a very unequal exchange. But knowest thou what men often do? We accept from a bad debtor oats instead of wheat; and our Lord accepteth from us our tears instead of his blood, and is well satisfied. He wept upon the cross, and for Lazarus, and for Jerusalem—for other men's sins!

If we weep for our own, it is no great wonder. "Weep we," quoth the holy man, in the Lives of the Fathers, when he had been long time entreated for a sermon, "shed we tears," said he, "lest our tears seethe us in hell."

III. Confession shall be complete, that is, all said to one man, from childhood. When the poor widow would cleanse her house, she gathereth into a heap, first of all, all the largest sweepings, and then shoveleth it out; after this she cometh again and heapeth together all that was left before, and shoveleth it out also; again, upon the small dust, if it is very dusty, she sprinkleth water, and sweepeth it quite away after all the rest. In like manner must he that confesseth himself, after the great sins, shovel out the small, and if the dust of light thoughts fly up too much, sprinkle tears on them, and they will not, then, blind the eyes of the heart. Whoso hideth ought hath told nought; for, be he ever so faultless, yet he is like the man who hath upon him many deadly wounds, and sheweth them all but one to the physician, and lets them all be healed but one, of which he dies. He is also like men in a ship that hath many leaks, into which the water makes its way in, and they stop them all but one, by means of which they are every one of

them drowned. We are told of a holy man who lay in his death-sickness, and was unwilling to confess a particular sin of his childhood, and his abbot urged him by all means to confess it. He answered and said that it was not necessary, because he was a little child when he did it. Reluctantly, however, at last, through the searching exhortations of the abbot, he told it, and died soon thereafter. After his death, he came one night and appeared to his abbot in snow-white garments, as one who was saved; and said that if he had not fully confessed that particular thing which he did in childhood, he should certainly have been condemned among those who are lost. We are told also of another man who was well nigh condemned because he once compelled a man to drink, and died unshriven of it. Likewise, of a lady because she had lent one of her garments to a woman to go to a wake. But if any one hath searched diligently all the recesses of his heart, and can discover nothing more, if there yet lurketh any thing unobserved, it is, I hope, thrust out with the rest, since there was no negligence about it; and if he had been conscious of more guilt, he would willingly have confessed it. "If the consciousness is wanting, the punishment makes up for it." Augustine.

IV. Confession must also be candid, that is, made without any concealment, and not palliated by comparisons, nor gently touched upon. But the words should be spoken plainly according to the deeds. It is a sign of hatred when men reprehend severely a thing that is greatly hated. If thou hatest thy sin, why dost thou speak of it in gentle terms? Why dost thou hide its foulness? Speak out its shame reproachfully, and rebuke it very sharply, if thou wouldst indeed confound the devil. "Sir," saith the woman, "I have had a lover;" or, "I have been foolish concerning myself." This is not plain confession. Put no cloak over it. Take away the accessories, that is, the circumstances. Uncover thyself and say, "Sir, the mercy of God, and thine! I am a foul stud mare: a stinking whore." Give thy enemy a foul name, and call thy sin by its name without disguise, that is, conceal thou nothing at all that is connected with it. Yet what is too foul may not be spoken. The foul deed need not be named by its own foul name. It is sufficient to speak of it in such a manner that the father confessor may clearly understand what thou wouldst express. There lieth about sin six things which conceal it; in Latin, circumstances; in English, they may be called

adjuncts: person, place, time, manner, number, cause.

Person—she that committed the sin, or with whom it was committed. Lay it open, and say, "Sir, I am a woman, and ought rightly to have been more modest than to speak as I have spoken, or to do as I have done; and, therefore, my sin is greater than if a man had done it, for it became me worse. I am an anchoress, a nun, a wedded wife, a maiden, a woman in whom such confidence is put, and one that had before been burnt with the same thing, and ought to have been more on my guard. Sir, it was with such a man;" and then name him—"a monk, a priest, or clerk, and of such an order, a married man, an innocent creature, a woman, as I am." Thus far as to the person.

Also concerning the place: "Sir, I played or spoke thus in the church; went to the play in the churchyard; looked on at this, or at the wrestling, and other foolish sports; spoke thus, or played, in the presence of secular men, or of religious men, in a house of anchorites, and at a different window than I ought; and near something sacred; I kissed him there; I touched him with my hand in such a place; or being alone in the church I thought thus; I looked upon him at the altar."

In like manner as to the time: "Sir, I was of such an age that I ought indeed to have kept myself more wisely. Sir, I did it in Lent, during the fast days, the holidays, when others were at church. Sir, I was soon overcome, and therefore the sin is greater than if I had been overcome by force, and by much violence. Sir, it was my fault, at first, that this thing went forward, through my coming into such a place, and at such a time. Before I ever did it, I reflected well how evil it were to do it, and did it nevertheless."

The manner likewise must be told, which is the fourth circumstance: "Sir, this sin I did thus, and in this manner; thus I first learned it, and thus I came first into it, and thus I went on to do it; and in so many ways; so fully, so shamefully; thus I sought pleasure; how I might give the most satisfaction to my inflamed desires;" and search out all the ways.

Number is the fifth circumstance—to tell the whole, how often it has been done: "Sir, I have done this so often; been accustomed to speak thus, and to listen to such speeches, and to think such thoughts, to neglect and forget things; to laugh, eat, drink, less or more than was needful. I have been so often angry since I last confessed, and for such a thing, and it lasted so long. I have so often spoken falsely, so

often, and this, and this. I have done this so many times, and in so many ways, and to so many persons."

Cause is the sixth circumstance. Cause is, why thou didst it, or helped to do it, or through what means it began: "Sir, I did it for pleasure, and for guilty love, and for gain, through fear, through flattery. Sir, I did it for evil, though no evil came of it. Sir, my light answer, or my light behaviour enticed him toward me. Sir, of this word came another; of this action, anger and evil words. Sir, the reason why the evil still continues is this: my heart was so weak." Let every one, according to what he is, tell the circumstances—man, as relates to him; woman, as it concerns her: for I have not said anything here, but to remind man or woman of that which happeneth to them, by what is here said in a desultory manner. Thus strip thy sin of these six coverings. Make it stark naked in thy confession, as Jeremiah teacheth, "Pour out thy heart as water." For, if oil be poured out of a vessel, yet there will be left in it somewhat of the liquor; and if milk be poured out, the colour will remain; and if wine be poured, the smell remaineth; but water goeth completely out at once. In such a manner, pour out thine heart; that is, all the evil that is in thine heart. And, if thou dost

not, behold how terribly God threateneth thee by the prophet Nahum : " Behold, I am against thee," saith the Lord, " and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame. And I will cast abominations upon thee." Thou wouldest not uncloak thyself to the priest in confession, and I will shew quite nakedly thy wickedness to all people, and thy shameful sins to all kingdoms—to the kingdom of earth, and to the kingdom of heaven, and to the kingdom of hell ; and I will bind up all thy vileness upon thine own neck, as is done to a thief when he is brought to be judged ; and thus, with all that ignominy packed upon thee, thou shalt be hurled headlong into hell. " Oh ! " saith St. Bernard, " what disgrace and what sorrow there will be when all the leaves shall be shaken off, and all that foul corruption is exposed and wrung out before all the wide world,"—the dwellers in earth and dwellers in heaven—not only of works, but of idle words and thoughts that are not amended here, as St. Anselm witnesseth, " Every tide and every time shall be there reckoned, in what manner it was here spent." " When all the leaves," saith St. Bernard, " shall be shaken off," etc. He had seen, as it seems, how Adam and Eve, when they had in the beginning sinned, gathered leaves and made of

them coverings to their unseemly members; and thus do many still, after them, "turning their hearts aside to words of craftiness, to justify themselves in their sins."

V. Confession ought to be made often. Wherefore we find in the Psalter, "We will confess to thee, O God;" and our Lord himself said to his disciples, "Go we again into Judea." Judea means confession; and so we find that he went often out of Galilee into Judea. Galilee signifieth wheel, to teach us that we should often retire from the whirl of worldly things, and the wheel of sin, and go to confession. For that is the sacrament which, next after the sacrament of the altar, and that of baptism, is most hateful to the devil; as he hath himself acknowledged to holy men, sorely against his will though it be. Can a web be well bleached, or a dirty cloth washed white, at one turn with a single watering? Thou washest thy hands two or three times in a single day; and wilt thou not wash thy soul, Jesus Christ's spouse? For the whiter it is, the impurity upon it is always the more apparent and the greater, if it is not washen. Often thou wilt not wash it, for the embrace of God, once a week. Confession, holy water, prayers, and holy meditations, benedictions, kneelings, and every

good word and work wash small sins, though we may not say all sins, but confession is always the head of all.

VI. Confession ought to be made speedily. If sin occurs by night, immediately, or in the morning; and if it occurs by day, before we sleep. Who would dare to sleep while his mortal foe holds a drawn sword over his head? He who slumbereth upon the brink of hell, often rolleth headlong into it, before he is at all aware. When any one has fallen amid the burning fire, is he not more than man, if he lieth and considereth when he shall arise? A woman who hath lost her needle, or a shoemaker his awl, seeketh it immediately, and turns over every straw until it be found; and God, when lost by sin, shall lie unsought full seven days!

"Many dogs," saith David, "have beset me." When greedy dogs stand before the board, is there not need of a rod? As oft as any of them snatch toward thee, and taketh from thee thy food, wilt thou not as often smite? Else it would snatch from thee all that thou hadst. Do thou so then. Take the rod of thy tongue, and as oft as the dog of hell snatcheth any good from thee, smite him immediately with the rod of tongue-shrift, and smite him so rudely, that he shall be loath afterwards to snatch at thee. Of

all striking this is the blow which is most hateful to him. Men beat immediately the dog that gnaweth leather, or worrieth sheep, that he may understand for what he is beaten, and then he dare not again do the same. In like manner beat thou the dog of hell immediately, with thy tongue in confession, and he will be afraid to do thee again such a spiteful trick. Who is so great a fool as to say of the dog that gnaws leather, "Stay till to-morrow: beat him not yet." But at once, "Beat, beat, beat, immediately." There is nothing in this world, that maketh him smart so sore, as doth such beating. There are nine things that ought to urge us to confess quickly. The punishment, that is always increasing with usury. For sin is the devil's money, which he giveth upon interest, and upon usury of punishment, and the longer the man lieth in his sin, the increase of punishment in purgatory, here, or in hell, waxeth always more. "He shall redeem their souls from usuries and iniquity." The second thing is the great and lamentable loss that he loseth, that nothing he ever doth is worthy of the approbation of God, nor pleasing to him. Jeremiah. "Strangers have devoured his strength." The third thing is death—that he knoweth not whether he shall not die suddenly that very day. Ecclus.

"Delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day. For his wrath shall come on a sudden, and in the time of vengeance he will destroy thee." The fourth thing is sickness: he that is sick cannot easily fix his thoughts on anything but his sickness, nor speak as he ought, but groan and cry out for his pain and suffering more than for his sins. "Thou shalt confess and live." The fifth thing is, the great shame that it is, after a fall, to lie so long; and especially under the devil. "Arise, thou that sleepest." The sixth thing is, that the wound is now always getting worse through delay, and is more difficult to heal. "Resist evil in the beginning, lest the remedy should be administered when too late." The seventh thing is evil habit; which is betokened by Lazarus, who had lain so long in the earth that he stank; over whom our Lord wept, as we are told in the Gospel, and gnashed his teeth, and moaned, and cried aloud upon him. These four things he did before he raised him, to shew how difficult it is for a man to arise from an evil habit, who lies putrifying in his sin. Saint Mary have mercy! When Lazarus stank after four days, how, then, must the sinful stink, after four or five years? "O God!" saith St. Austin, "with what difficulty doth he arise who

hath lain long under the habit of sin." The eighth thing is that which Saint Gregory saith, "The sin that is not amended by penitence soon draws on another," and thereafter a third, and so on, every one giveth birth to another and a worse progeny than the mother herself. Thus the deeper men wade into the devil's muddy fen they are the longer in getting out of it. The ninth reason is this: the sooner a man begins here to do his penance, he hath the less to amend in the pain of purgatory. Now these are nine reasons, and there are many more, on account of which confession ought to be made quickly.

VII. Confession ought to be humble, as the publican's was, and not as the Pharisee's, who recounted his good deeds, and shewed openly that which was whole, when he ought to have uncovered his wounds; and therefore he departed from the temple unhealed, as our Lord himself telleth. Humility may be compared to those crafty varlets who expose their dropping ulcers and their running sores, which they always put forth; and if the sore is hideous they shew it the more openly in the sight of the rich, that they may pity them, and give them alms the more readily. They likewise conceal their whole clothes, and put on smock-frocks over them, all torn. Just in this manner,

humility happily and humbly beguileth our Lord, and obtaineth good things from him; begging with pious knavery, she always concealeth her good things and sheweth her poverty, and weeping and groaning, exposeth her rankling sore in the sight of God; and, without ceasing, beseecheth him by his precious sufferings, and by his precious blood, by his five wounds, by his mother's tears, by the paps from which he sucked the milk that fed him, for the love of all his saints, for the kind affection which he hath to his dear spouse, that is, to the pure soul, and by his death on the cross for her redemption. Thus doth she, with earnest adjuration, weep and cry for help to the wretched sufferer, wherewith to administer medicine to the sick, and to heal her festering sore; and thus she adjureth our Lord; and he cannot, for pity, refuse her, nor grieve her heart with a refusal, since he is so exceedingly bountiful that there is nothing more agreeable to him than to find an occasion to give. But, when any one boasteth of his goodness, as the proud do in confession, what need is there to help them? Many have such a way of speaking of their sins, that it is equivalent to a covert boasting and hunting after the praise of greater sanctity.

VIII. Confession must be made with shame. By

the passing of the people of Israel through the Red Sea, which was red and bitter, it is signified that we must go to heaven through red shame and bitter penitence, that is, in true confession. Christ knoweth that it is very just that we should be ashamed before man, who forgot shame when we did the deed and the sin in the sight of God, "For all that ever exists, is naked," saith St. Paul, "and open to His eyes to whom we must give an account of all our doings." "Shame is the greatest part of our penance," as St. Austin saith. And St. Bernard saith that the sight of no precious jewel giveth so much delight to man, as the blushing of a man's face who truly confesseth his sins delighteth the eye of God. Understand rightly this matter. Confession is a sacrament, which hath an outward resemblance of the effect which it worketh within, as it is in baptism. The outward washing in baptism betokeneth the washing of the soul within. It is the same with regard to confession. The lively red of the countenance tells that the soul, which was livid, and had nothing but the hue of death, hath got the hue of life, and is beautifully reddened.

IX. Confession ought to be made with such anxious fear that thou mayest say with St. Jerome, "Whenever I have confessed, it always seems to me

as if I had not confessed." For some of the circumstances are always forgotten. Wherefore, said St. Austin, "The best man of all this world, if our Lord judged him according to strict justice, and not according to mercy, should be in a woful condition. But his mercy toward us always outweigheth his strict judgment."

X. Confession must be hopeful. When a man saith all that he knoweth, and doth all that he can, God requires no more of him. But hope and fear should always be mingled together. To intimate this, it was commanded in the old law that no man should separate the two grindstones: The nether, that lieth still, and beareth a heavy load, betokeneth fear, which draweth man from sin, and is loaded here with hard things, that it may be free from harder. The upper stone betokeneth hope, which runneth, and is always actively employed in good works, trusting to receive a great reward. Let no man separate these two from each other. For, as St. Gregory saith, "Fear without hope maketh a man to despair; and hope without fear maketh him presumptuous." These two sins, despair and presumption, are the devil's tristres, where the unhappy beast seldom escapeth. A tristre is where men wait with the grey-

hounds to intercept the game, or to prepare the nets for them. All that he driveth is toward one of these two points; for there are his nets, and there his greyhounds, Despair and Presumption, are met together, and of all sins they are nearest the gate of hell. With fear, and without hope, that is, with despair, was the confession of Cain and of Judas; and, therefore, they died without hope, that is, in despair. Without fear, with presumption, is that unhappy person's saying, of whom David saith in the Psalter, "According to the multitude of his wrath he will not seek him." God is not so angry, saith he, as ye pretend that he is. "No!" saith David. "Yea!" and then saith wherefore. "Wherefore hath the wicked provoked God? for he hath said in his heart, He will not require it." First of all he calleth the presumptuous wicked. The wicked, wherewith provoketh he God Almighty? "Wherewith?" saith he; "with this, that he saith, He will not judge so strictly, as ye say." "Yea, surely, but he will." Thus, these two sins are two fierce robbers; for the one, that is, presumption, taketh away from God his righteous judgment and his justice; the other, that is, despair, taketh away from him his mercy. And thus they both are endeavouring to

destroy God himself; for God could not exist without justice, nor without mercy. Now then, what sins are worthy of being compared to these which would, in their corrupt manner, kill God? If thou art too confident, and accountest God too mild to inflict vengeance upon sin, according to thy account he is pleased with sin. But consider how he avenged upon his archangel that thought of pride alone, and how he avenged himself upon Adam for the bite of an apple, and how he sunk Sodom and Gomorrah, men, women, and children, and all the famous cities, an entire region of great extent, down to the abyss of hell, where the Dead Sea now is, in which there is nothing that hath life; and how, in Noah's flood, he drowned all the world but eight persons who were in the ark; how severely he avenged himself upon his own beloved people Israel, as often as they were guilty. Dathan and Abiram, Korah and his companions, and others whom, in like manner, he slew, often in many thousands, for their murmuring. On the other hand, if thou hast despair of his unbounded mercy, consider how easily and how soon Saint Peter, who had forsaken him, and that for a word spoken by a maid-servant, was reconciled to him; and how the thief on the cross, who had always lived in sin, obtained

mercy of him in an instant, by one candid speech. Wherefore, between these two, despair and presumption, let hope and fear be always joined together.

XI. Confession of secret sins ought also to be always prudent, and made to a prudent man, and not to young priests, I mean young of wit, nor yet to foolish old men. Begin with pride, and examine all the branches thereof, as they are written above, which apply to thee. Thereafter, of envy, in like manner; and thus proceed downward, from one to another, until thou comest to the last, and draw together the whole progeny under the mother.

XII. Confession ought to be truthful. Do not lie concerning thyself, for, as St. Austin saith, "He who lieth concerning himself, through too much humility, becomes sinful though he were not so before." St. Gregory saith, however, "It is the nature of a good heart to be afraid of sin, often where there is none," or to ponder his sin somewhat more than he need. To ponder it too little is as bad, or worse. The middle way is always the golden mean. Let us always fear; for, often we think to do a little harm, and we commit a great sin; and often we think to do good, and we do much evil. Say we always, then,

with St. Anselm, "Even our good is, in a manner, so tainted with evil that it cannot please God, or rather must displease him." St. Paul saith, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." No good that is in us is of ourselves: our good is God's; but our sin is of ourselves, and is our own. "When I do God's good," saith St. Anselm, "my own evil, somehow, so corrodes it that I do it either without pleasure, ot too soon, or too late, or I think highly of it. If no man should know it, I either wish that some one might know it, or I do it negligently, or too inconsiderately, too abundantly, or too sparingly. Thus is some evil always mingled with my good, which the grace of God giveth me, so that it can please God little, and may often displease him." St. Mary! when the holy man spoke thus of himself, how truly may we unhappy sinners say the same of ourselves!

XIII. Confession ought to be voluntary, that is, willingly, unasked, and not drawn out of thee, as if it were against thy will. When thou hast any thing to confess, say all, unasked. We are not to put any questions, unless it be quite necessary; for evil may come of questioning, unless it be done the more wisely. On the other hand, many a one puts off confession

until he is in the last extremity. But the proverb, "He may not when he would, who would not when he might," often applieth to him. There is no greater absurdity than to set a time to God, as if grace were one's own, and a man could take grace to himself at whatever time he set. Nay, my friend, nay! The time is in God's hand, and not at thy discretion. When God offers, reach forth with both hands; for, if he withdraw his hand, thou mayest afterwards wait long. Should sickness, or any other cause drive thee to confession, behold! what saith St. Austin? "Forced services please not our Lord." But yet, "Better is yea than nay." Before is better than too late. "True repentance," saith he, "is never too late." But it is better, as David saith, "My flesh hath flourished again, and is altogether renewed; for I will make my confession, and praise God with my heart." He saith well, "has flourished," to signify voluntary confession; for the earth quite unconstrained, and the trees likewise, open themselves and bring forth various flowers. Humility, abstinence, dove-like meekness, and other such virtues are fair flowers in the eyes of God, and sweet smelling in his nostrils. Thus, in Canticles, "The flowers have appeared in our land." Of these, that is, of such

flowers, make thou his bower in thy heart; for he saith his delight is to dwell there: "My delight is with the sons of men."

XIV. Confession ought to be our own. In confession, no man must expose any one but himself, as far as possible. I say this because such a case and such an occurrence may happen to a man that he may not be able fully and entirely to confess himself without exposing another. But, yet, let him not mention the name of such a one, even though the father confessor should well know to whom it refers. But thou mightest say thus: a monk, or a priest, and not William nor Walter, although there be no other.

XV. Confession must be made with a firm purpose to do the penance, and to leave off the sin. Thou must say to the priest, "I am firmly resolved, in my mind and heart, to leave off this sin, and to do the penance." The priest ought not to ask thee if thou wilt then furthermore vow to leave off thy sin. It is enough that thou hast it in thy heart faithfully to do it, through God's grace, and if thou fallest afterwards into it, that thou wilt immediately arise, through God's help, and come again to confession. "Go," saith our Lord, "and resolve that thou wilt no more sin." Lo! thus he asked no other security.

XVI. Confession ought to be long premeditated. By reflecting upon five things, recollect thy sins. Of every age of thy life, of childhood, of youth; bring them all into remembrance. Thereafter recollect the places in which thou dwelledst, and think earnestly what thou didst in each place separately, and at every age. Thereafter, seek and trace out all thy sins in thy five senses, then in all the members wherewith thou hast sinned, and in which thou hast sinned most or oftenest: lastly, on particular days and times.

You have now had, as I think, all the sixteen parts, into which I promised to divide the subject, and I have broken them all to you, my dear sisters, as is done to children, who might die of hunger if they had not their bread broken; and, as ye know, many a crumb hath fallen from me. Seek and gather them up, for they are food for the soul. Such confession, that hath these sixteen parts, hath those same great powers of which I spoke first; three against the devil, and three against ourselves, more precious than all treasures of gold, and than all jewels of India.

My dear sisters, this fifth part, which is of confession, belongeth to all men alike. Wherefore do not wonder that I have not spoken to you in a particular manner

in this part. Take, however, to your behoof this short and concluding summary of all mentioned and known sins, as of pride, of ambition, or of presumption, of envy, of wrath, of sloth, of carelessness, of idle words, of immoral thoughts, of any idle hearing, of any false joy, or of heavy mourning, of hypocrisy, of meat and of drink, too much or too little, of grumbling, of morose countenance, of silence broken, of sitting too long at the parlour window, of hours ill said, or without attention of heart, or at a wrong time; of any false word, or oath; of play, of scornful laughter, of dropping crumbs, or spilling ale, or letting a thing grow mouldy, or rusty, or rotten; clothes not sewed, wet with rain, or unwashen; a cup or a dish broken, or any thing carelessly looked after which we are using, or which we ought to take care of; or of cutting, or of damaging, through heedlessness. Of all the things in this rule which are neglected, let her confess once a week at least, for there is none of these things so small that the devil hath not written in his roll. But confession eraseth it, and maketh him to lose much of his labour. And all that confession doth not erase he will read full readily on the day of judgment, in order to accuse thee with it; a single word shall not be wanting. Now, therefore, I advise that

we give him the least to write we ever can; for no employment is more gratifying to him. And whatever is written be careful to erase it cleanly. With nothing may ye overcome nor defeat him better. An anchoress may confess to any priest such open sins as all men are liable to fall into; but she must be well assured and confident of the integrity of the priest to whom she sheweth unreservedly how it stands with her in regard to carnal temptations, if she hath them, or if she is tempted with them, except it be under the fear of death. I am of opinion, however, that she may say in this manner, "Sir, carnal temptations which I have, or have had, prevail over me too much on account of my weakness. I am afraid lest I should go driving on sometimes much too far upon foolish, and, at times, foul thoughts, as if I were hunting after pleasure. I might, through God's powerful help, often shake them off me, if I were promptly and stoutly to exert myself. I am sorely afraid lest the pleasure in the thought should often continue too long, so that it might well nigh attain the consent of the mind." I dare not recommend that she should confess more fully concerning this to young priests, but to her own father confessor, or to some other man of holy life. If she may have him, let her pour all

out that is in the crock; there, let her vomit out all that perilous stuff; there, with words foul as its own filth, let her censure it, so vehemently, that she may be afraid lest she offend the ears of him who heareth her sins. And, if there is any anchoress who is ignorant of such things, let her heartily thank Jesus Christ, and let her continue in fear. The devil is not yet dead; let her know that, though he may be asleep.

Trivial faults correct thus, immediately, yourselves; and yet, mention them to the priest, when ye think of them in confession. For the very least of them, as soon as ye are conscious of it, fall down in the form of a cross to the earth before your altar, and say, "Mea culpa;" I am guilty; Lord, have mercy. The priest need not for any fault, unless it be the greater, impose any other penance upon you than the life which ye lead according to this rule. But after the absolution, he shall say, "The merit of all the good thou mayest have done, and all the evil thou mayest have suffered for the love of Jesus Christ, within thy monastic walls, I grant thee, and I apply it all to thee, towards the remission of these, and towards the remission and forgiveness of all thy sins." And then he may impose some small thing upon thee,

or upon you, as a Psalm, or two Paternosters, ten or twelve Ave Marys. He may add flagellations too, if he think fit. According to the circumstances, which are written above, he shall judge the sin to be greater or less. One venial sin may be very deadly, through some evil circumstance that is joined with it.

After confession, it is proper to speak of penance, that is, amends-deed, and thus we have a way out of this fifth part into the sixth part.

PART VI.—Of Penance.

ALL that ye endure, my dear sisters, and all the good you ever do and all that you suffer is penance, and that, strong penance. It is all like martyrdom to you in so strict an order, for ye are night and day upon our Lord's cross. Glad may ye ever be thereof. For, as St. Paul saith, As ye share with him in his suffering on earth, ye shall also share with him in his blessedness in heaven. "Wherefore," St. Paul saith, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." All our joy must be in the cross of Jesus Christ. This saying belongs especially to anchoresses, whose joy ought to be wholly in our Lord's cross. I will begin from a higher point, and so come down to this part of the subject. Now pay good attention, for it is nearly all from the Sentences of St. Bernard.

The elect of God on earth are of three kinds: one kind may be compared to good pilgrims, another to the dead, the third to men suspended voluntarily

upon the cross of Jesus Christ. The first are good, the second are better, the third are best of all.

To the first St. Peter crieth earnestly and saith, "I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, that ye abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." The good pilgrim holds always on his way straight forward; although he see or hear idle sports and wonders by the way, he doth not stop as fools do, but holds on his route, and hasteneth toward his inn where he is to lodge; neither doth he carry any treasure with him but barely for his expenses, nor garments either, except one which he needeth. These are holy men who, though they are in the world, are but in it as pilgrims, and by leading a good life go toward the kingdom of heaven, and say, with the Apostle, "We have no dwelling-place here, but we seek another dwelling-place;" and they are satisfied with the smallest accommodation possible, and neither have, nor make any account of any worldly pleasure, though they are in their journey through the world, as I said above of pilgrims, but they have their heart always heaven-ward. And they ought well to have it, for other pilgrims go with toil to seek a holy man's bones, as of St. James, or St. Giles, but these pilgrims who go toward heaven go to be sainted, and to find

God himself, and all his holy saints living in blessedness, and to live with them for ever in endless joy. Surely they find St. Julian's inn, which wayfaring men diligently seek.

Now these are good, but the next are still better. For, although, as I said before, all pilgrims go ever forward, and do not become citizens in the world's city, yet they are sometimes delighted with the things they see by the way, and stand still a while, though not altogether, and many things happen to them whereby they are hindered, so that,—the more is the harm—some come home late, some never. Who then are safer and more out of the world than pilgrims are ? that is to say, than those men who have worldly things and love them not, but give them away as they come to them, and go unburdened and light, as pilgrims, toward heaven. Who are better than they ? God knoweth ! they are better to whom the Apostle saith in his epistle, " Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ. When he that is your life appeareth and springeth as the dawn after the darkness of the night, ye also shall spring with him, brighter than the sun, into eternal blessedness, who now are thus dead." Their course of life is nobler, for a pilgrim is subject to manifold evils. Though the dead lie unburied,

and rot upon the ground, he is unconscious of it. Praise him, blame him, put him to shame by deed or word, all is equally agreeable to him. It is a happy death which thus removeth a man or a woman out of the world, while they are alive. And surely, she who is thus dead in herself, God liveth in her heart, for this is that which the Apostle saith, "I live, not I, but Christ liveth in me;" which is as if he said, Worldly speech, worldly sight, and every worldly thing findeth me dead; but whatsoever relates to Christ, that I see, and hear, and do as one who lives. Thus is every religious man and woman dead to the world, and alive in Christ. This is a high degree; but there is one still higher; and who stood ever in that? God knows he who said, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." This is what I said above, Christ shield me from having any delight in this world, but in Jesus Christ's cross, my Lord, through whom the world is worthless to me, and I am worthless to it, as a man that is crucified. Ah, Lord! how high did he stand who spoke in this wise? And this is the anchoress's degree, who should say thus, God forbid that I should glory, etc. In nothing let me delight

but in God's cross, that I suffer wrong and am accounted worthless, as God was on the cross. Observe, dear sisters, how this degree is higher than any of the others are. The pilgrim in the world's way, though he is going forward toward the home of heaven, seeth and heareth sometimes vain things, and sometimes speaketh them. He is provoked to anger by wrongs, and many things may hinder him from pursuing his journey. The dead are no more conscious of reproach than of honour, of hard than of soft; for he feeleth neither, and therefore he earns neither sorrow nor joy. But he that is on the cross, and hath delight in it, turneth reproach to honour, and sorrow into joy, and earneth, therefore, a double reward. Such are they who are never glad-hearted except when they are suffering some grief or some reproach with Jesus on his cross; for this is the greatest happiness on earth when any one can, for the love of God, bear reproach and pain. Thus observe, that true anchoresses are not merely pilgrims, nor yet merely dead, but they are of the third class. For all their delight is to be suspended painfully and ignominiously with Jesus on his cross. They may sing gladly with the holy Church, "It behoves us to glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;" that is, as I said before,

whatever may be the case with others: they place their happiness, some in carnal pleasures, some in the deceitful vanities of the world, some in the evil that befalls others; but we must glory in the cross of Jesus Christ, that is, in the ignominy and pain that he endured on the cross. Many might be willing to suffer in some measure bodily hardships, and to be meanly accounted of, but not to endure ignominy. He is only in part upon God's cross who is not ready to endure them both.

Contempt and ill usage; these two things, ignominy and pain, as St. Bernard saith, are the two arms of the ladder which reach up to heaven, and between those arms are fixed the staves or steps of all the virtues by which men climb up to the blessedness of heaven. And because David had the two arms of this ladder, though he was king, he climbed upward, and said boldly to our Lord, "Behold, and see my humility and my labour, and forgive me all my sins." Mark well these two words which David joineth together —labour and humility: labour, in pain and grief, in anxiety and sorrow; humility, against the unjust ignominy which a man endures who is despised. "Behold in me both of these," saith David the beloved of God, "I have these two arms of the ladder."

"Leave behind me," saith he, "and cast away from me all my offences," that I may be lightened of their weight, and may mount up lightly to heaven by the arms of this ladder.

These two things, grief and ignominy, joined together, are Elijah's wheels that were of fire, as we are told, and bore him up to Paradise, where he still liveth. Fire is hot and red. By the heat is meant every pain that hurts the flesh. Ignominy is meant by the redness; and it well may be so. They are here rolling like wheels that revolve quickly, and soon pass away. The same is also signified by the sword of the cherubim before the gates of Paradise, which was of flame and revolving and turning about. None come into Paradise but through this flaming sword, which was hot and red; and in Elijah's chariot of fire, that is, through pain and ignominy, which turn round lightly and quickly pass away. And was not God's cross coloured and reddened by his precious blood, to shew in himself that pain and sorrow and anguish should be stained with ignominy? Is it not written of himself, "He was obedient to his Father, not only to death, but to death on the cross"? In that he saith first "to death," pain is to be understood; and in that he subjoins, "to death on the

cross," ignominy is meant; for such was God's death on the cross—painful and ignominious above all others. Whosoever dieth in God and on God's cross must suffer these two things for him—ignominy and pain. I account it ignominy to be always reckoned contemptible, and to beg one's food, if need be, like a vagabond, and to be another's bedesman, as ye are, dear sisters, and often bear the arrogance of such as might be your bond-servants. That of which I am speaking is blessed ignominy. Pain is not wanting in these two things, in which all penitence consists. Be happy and glad, for in requital of these two, twofold joys are prepared for you—in requital of ignominy, honour; and in requital of pain, happiness and rest without end. Isaiah saith, "They shall in their own land possess double joy for the double sorrow that they endure here." Upon the Epistle of St. James, for, as "the bad have no lot in heaven, nor have the good any lot on earth," in their own land they shall enjoy happiness—two kinds of reward for twofold sorrow. As if he had said, "Think it no marvel though they suffer here as in a strange land, and in a strange soil, among foreigners, both shame and sorrow; for so doth many a nobleman who is a stranger in a foreign land." Men must endure toil

abroad, and enjoy rest at home. And is not he a foolish knight who seeketh rest in the combat, and repose in the lists? "All this life here on earth is as a fight," as Job witnesseth; but after this fight here, if we fight well, honour and repose await us at home, in our own land, which is the kingdom of heaven. Observe, now, with what certainty our Lord himself saith, "When I sit to judge, ye shall sit with me, and judge with me all the world, which shall be judged, kings and emperors, knights and clerks." St. Bernard. By the sitting, rest and ease is signified, in opposition to the toil that is in this world, and by the honour of the judgment which they shall judge is to be understood the most honourable dignity, in opposition to the shame and humiliation which they patiently endure here for the love of God.

Now, then, there is nothing for us but to suffer gladly; for it is written of God himself, "Through ignominious pain he came to the glory of a blessed resurrection." It is no marvel, therefore, if we wretched sinners suffer pains here, if we would arise joyfully at the day of judgment; and this we may do, through His grace, if we earnestly desire it. This is St. Paul's saying, who speaketh always so well. "If we be planted to the likeness of God's death, we

shall be planted to the likeness of his resurrection ; " that is to say, if we live in ignominy and pain through love of him, in which two he died, we shall be like him in his joyful resurrection—our body bright as his is, world without end, as St. Paul testifieth, " We look for the Saviour, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Let others adorn their body who run on beforehand ; and let us wait for our Saviour, who shall adorn ours after the fashion of his own. " If we suffer with him, we shall be in bliss with him." Is not this a good covenant ? Christ knows he is not a good nor a trusty partner who will not take part in the loss, as well as afterwards in the profit. Gloss : " God shed his blood for all men, but it is efficacious to them only who abstain from carnal pleasure, and mortify themselves." And is that any wonder ? Is not God our head, and all we his members, and is not every member pained when the head is in pain ? His member, then, he is not who hath no ache under such a painfully aching head. When the head sweats well, is it not an evil sign of the member that doth not sweat ? He who is our head did sweat the sweat of blood for our sickness, and to heal us of that epidemic disease in which all lands lay, and in which many are still lying.

That member, therefore, which doth not sweat in laborious suffering for love of him, God knows, remaineth in its sickness; and there is nothing to be done but to cut it off, though it seem painful to God; for a finger off is better than one always aching. Now, doth he please God who thus dismembers him of himself, because he is unwilling to sweat? St. Mary have mercy! It was necessary, we are told, "that Christ should endure pain and suffering, and thus have entrance into his kingdom." Observe well what he saith, "thus have entrance into his kingdom." Thus, and no otherwise! And we wretched sinners would mount up with ease to heaven, which is so high above us, and of such excellent worth! And yet we cannot, without labour, erect a little cottage; nor obtain a pair of shoes with thongs without buying them! Either we, who think that we may buy everlasting joy for a mere trifle, are fools, or the blessed saints are, who bought it so dear. Were not St. Peter and St. Andrew, for that cause, extended on the cross, and St. Lawrence on the gridiron; and had not innocent maidens their paps cut off, and were whirled on wheels, and beheaded? But our folly is evident; and they were like those artful children of rich parents who purposely tear

their clothes that they may have new ones. Our old kirtle is the flesh, which we have from Adam, our old father; we shall receive the new from God, our rich Father, in the resurrection on the day of judgment, when our flesh shall shine brighter than the sun, because it is now torn here with tribulation and distress. Of them who tear their kirtle in this manner, Isaiah saith, "A people dismembered and torn, a terrible people, shall make of themselves a gift to our Lord." A people dismembered and torn with a hard and austere life he calleth a terrible people. For the fiend is afraid and terrified of such; and because Job was such he complained of him and said, "He will give skin for skin, the old for the new." As if he had said, "I shall gain nothing by attacking him, for he is one of the torn people, who tears his old kirtle, and rendeth the old cloak of his mortal skin." For that skin is immortal which in the new resurrection shall shine seven times brighter than the sun. Ease and carnal enjoyment are the devil's marks. When he sees these marks in man or woman he knows that the castle is his, and goeth boldly in where he sees such banners erected as are usual in a castle. But, in the torn people, he misseth his marks, and among them he seeth God's banner

erected, which is a hard life, which the devil is much afraid of, as Isaiah testifieth.

"My dear sir," some one may say, "is it wisdom now for a man or woman thus to afflict themselves?" Do thou also answer me this: Of two men, both of whom are sick, which is the wiser? The one abstains from all the things that he desires, both meat and drink, and drinketh bitter sabraz, in order to recover his health; the other followeth all his inclinations, and feedeth his lusts, contrary to his sickness, and soon loseth his life. Whether of these two is wiser? Which is the better friend to himself? Which of them loveth himself more? And who is there that is not sick of sin? For our sickness, God drank a poisonous drink upon the cross. And will not we taste any bitter remedy for ourselves? It must not be so. It is not so. His follower must surely follow him in his sufferings, with bodily pain. Let no one think that he can ascend to the stars with luxurious ease.

"Now, sir," some one saith again, "and will God avenge himself so severely upon sin?" Yes, O man, or woman, for consider now how greatly he hateth it. How would a man beat the thing itself if he found it, who for his great hatred of it beat the shadow,

and every thing that had any resemblance to it? How bitterly did God the Father Almighty beat his dear Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who never did any sin, but merely because he bore flesh like our flesh, that is full of sin! And shall we be spared who bear upon us his Son's death—the weapons that slew him, which were our sins? And he who had no sin, but only the shadow of it, was in that shadow so ignominiously punished, and so wofully tormented, that before it came to this, when it was only threatening him, he prayed for mercy from his Father. "I feel great horror," saith our Lord, "at the prospect of my sufferings. My Father, if now it be possible, spare me at this time; nevertheless Thy will and not mine be ever fulfilled." His dear Father did not on that account forbear, but laid on him so bitterly that he began to cry with a sorrowful voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani," "My God, my God, my dear Father! hast thou altogether cast me off?" me, thine only Son, that thou beatest me thus severely? Yet, for all this, he left not off, but beat him so long and so very fiercely that he died on the cross. Saith Isaiah, "thus our beating fell upon him," for he placed himself between us and his Father, who was threatening to smite us, as the mother who is full of pity placeth

herself between her child and the angry stern father when he is about to beat him. Thus did our Lord Jesus Christ. He met the death-blow himself, to shield us thereby, thanked be his mercy! Where a great blow is given, it reboundeth again, upon those who stand nigh. Truly, whosoever is nigh him who met the heavy blows, they will rebound upon him, and he will never complain; because this is the proof that he stands nigh him; and the rebounding stroke is very easy to bear out of love to him who received such heavy blows to protect us from the devil's staff in the pains of hell.

Still, saith many a one, "What is God profited though I afflict myself for his love?" Dear man, or woman, God is pleased with our good. Our good is that we do what we ought. Pay attention to this example. If a man had travelled a long way, and some one came and told him that his dear wife was grieving so much for him that she had no pleasure in any thing without him, but for thinking of his love was become lean and pallid; would it not please him better than if it were told him that she was merry and sportive, and had wedded another man, and was living in pleasure? Even so our Lord, who is the soul's husband, and seeth all that she doth, though

he sits on high, is full well pleased that she longeth for him, and will hasten to her so much the sooner, with the gift of his grace, or he will go and bring her to him once for all, to glory without end.

Let not any one handle herself too gently, lest she deceive herself. She will not be able, for her life, to keep herself pure, nor to maintain herself aright in chastity without two things, as Saint Ailred wrote to his sister. The one is, giving pain to the flesh by fasting, by watching, by flagellations, by wearing coarse garments, by a hard bed, with sickness, with much labour. The other thing is the moral qualities of the heart, as devotion, compassion, mercy, pity, charity, humility, and other virtues of this kind. "Sir," thou answerest me, "doth God sell his grace? Is not grace a free gift?" My dear sisters, although purity is not bought of God, but is given freely, ingratitude resisteth it, and renders those unworthy to possess so excellent a thing who will not cheerfully submit to labour for it. Amidst pleasures and ease, and carnal abundance, who was ever chaste? Who ever carried fire within her that did not burn? Shall not a pot that boileth rapidly be emptied of some of the water, or have cold water cast into it, and the

burning fuel withdrawn? The pot of the belly that is always boiling with food, and especially with drink, is so nigh a neighbour to that ill-disciplined member that it imparts to it the fire of its heat. Yet many anchoresses, more is the harm, are of such fleshly wisdom, and so exceedingly afraid lest their head ache, and lest their body should be too much enfeebled, and are so careful of their health, that the spirit is weakened and sickeneth in sin, and they who ought alone to heal their soul, with contrition of heart and mortification of the flesh, become physicians and healers of the body. Did Saint Agatha so? who answered and said to our Lord's messenger who brought her salve to heal her breasts, "Fleshly medicine I never applied to myself." And have ye never heard the story of the three holy men, of whom one was wont, for his cold stomach, to use hot spices, and was more interested about meat and drink than the other two, who, even if they were sick, took no heed of what was wholesome and what was unwholesome to eat or to drink, but always took directly whatever God sent them, nor ever made much ado about ginger, or valerian, or cloves? One day, when the three were fallen asleep, and the third, of whom I spoke above, lay between these two, the Queen of Heaven came,

and two maidens with her, one of whom bare what seemed an electuary, the other bare a spoon of good gold. Our Lady took some of it with the spoon, and put it into the mouth of one, and the maidens passed on to the middlemost. "Nay," said our Lady, "he is his own physician, go over to the third." A holy man stood not far off and beheld all this. When a sick man hath at hand any thing that will do him good, he may piously use it; but to be so anxious about it is not pleasing to God, and especially for one of such a religious profession to be anxious is not pleasing to God. God and his disciples speak of the art of healing the soul; Hippocrates and Galen of the health of the body. He who was the most learned of the disciples of Jesus Christ, saith that "the wisdom of the flesh is the death of the soul." "We smell the battle afar off," as Job saith. Thus we often dread a bodily disease before it come. The soul disease attacks us and we bear it, to escape from the bodily disease, as if it were better to endure the fire of lust than headache, or the grumbling of a disordered stomach. And which of these two is better, in sickness to be a free child of God, than in bodily health to be a bond-servant under sin? And I do not say this as if wisdom and discretion were not

always joined. Wisdom is the mother and the nurse of all virtues; but we often call that wisdom which is not wisdom. For it is true wisdom to prefer the health of the soul to that of the body; and when we cannot have them both together, to choose bodily hurt rather than, by too powerful temptations, the destruction of the soul. We are told that Nicodemus brought for the anointing of our Lord an hundred pounds of myrrh and of aloes, which are bitter spices, and betoken toilsome labour, and mortification of the flesh. A hundred is a complete number and denotes perfection, that is, a complete work, to signify that we ought to perfect the mortification of the flesh as far as may reasonably be endured. By the weight is signified discretion and wisdom—that every man should weigh with wisdom what he is able to do, and not be so exceedingly spiritual as to neglect the body, nor, on the other hand, so indulgent to the body that it might become disorderly, and make the spirit its servant. Now most of what has just been said is concerning external bitterness. Let us now say something of bitterness internal; for, of these two bitternesses ariseth sweetness, even in this world, and not in heaven only.

As I said just now that Nicodemus brought oint-

ments wherewith to anoint our Lord, even so the three Marys brought precious spices wherewith to anoint his body. Take good heed now, my dear sisters: these three Marys denote three bitternesses; for this name, Mary, meaneth bitterness, as do Mararaht and Merariht, of which I have already spoken. The first bitterness is remorse and making amends for sin, when the sinner is first converted to our Lord. This is to be understood by the first Mary, Mary Magdalene; and with good reason, for she, in great remorse and in great bitterness of heart, left off her sins and turned to our Lord. But because some through too much bitterness might fall into despair, Magdalene, which signifieth the height of a tower, is likened (*lit.* joined) to Mary, by which is signified hope of great mercy, and of the joy of heaven. The second bitterness is in wrestling and struggling against temptations, and this bitterness is denoted by the other Mary, Mary the mother of Jacob; for Jacob meaneth wrestler. This wrestling is very bitter to many who are well advanced in the way to heaven, because they still sometimes waver in temptations, which are the devil's casts, against which they must wrestle with vigorous efforts. For, as St. Austin saith, Pharaoh when despised was roused to punish the affront. As

long as the people of Israel were in Egypt in subjection to Pharaoh, he never led an army against them. But when they fled from him, then he pursued them with all his forces. Wherefore it is necessary always to fight bitterly against Pharaoh, that is, against the devil. For, as Ezekiel saith, "Thou shalt flee from blood, and blood shall pursue thee." Flee from sin, and sin will always follow after thee. It has been sufficiently shewn above how the good man is never safe from all temptations. As soon as he hath overcome one, he immediately meets with another. The third bitterness consists in longing for heaven, and weariness of this world, when one is of such exalted piety that his heart is at rest with regard to the war against vice, and he is, as it were, in the gates of heaven, and all worldly things seem bitter to him. And this bitterness is to be understood by Mary Salome, the third Mary. For Salome siginifieth peace, and they who have peace and the repose of a pure conscience, have in their heart bitterness of this life, which detains them from blessedness which they long for, and from God whom they love. Thus we see that in every state bitterness prevails: first, in the beginning, when we are reconciled to God—in the progress of a good life—and in the last end. Who,

then, is on God's side who desireth in this world ease or abundance ?

But now, observe here, my dear sisters, how after bitterness cometh sweetness. Bitterness buyeth it, for, as the Gospel saith, those three Marys bought sweet-smelling spices, to anoint our Lord with. By spices, which are sweet, is to be understood the sweetness of a devout heart. Those three Marys buy it, that is, through bitterness we arrive at sweetness. By this name, Mary, always understand bitterness. Through Mary's request and entreaty at the marriage, water was changed to wine, which is thus to be understood, that, through the prayer of bitterness that we suffer here for God, the heart, which was watery, tasteless, and felt no savour of God, no more than of water, shall then be changed to wine, that is, that heart shall find a taste in him sweet above all wines. Wherefore, saith the wise man, "The patient man bears that which is bitter for a while, because he shall soon afterwards have a return of joy." And Anna, in Tobias, saith of our Lord, "Blessed be thou, O Lord, who makest a calm after a storm, and after weeping and tears bestowest mirth and joy." Solomon saith, "If thou hungerest after the sweet, thou must first, surely, eat of the bitter." In the Canticles,

"I will go," saith God's dear spouse, "to the hill of frankincense by the mountain of myrrh." Observe: Which is the way to the sweetness of frankincense? By the myrrh of bitterness. And again in the same love-book: "Who is she that goeth up by the desert, as a pillar of smoke of aromatical spices, of myrrh and frankincense?" Aromatic spices are composed of myrrh, and of frankincense. And myrrh he placeth before, and frankincense cometh after. "Of aromatical spices, myrrh and frankincense." Now, some one complaineth that she cannot have sweetness—neither of God nor sweetness within. Let her not wonder, if she is not Mary; for she must buy it with bitterness without; but not with every bitterness, for some causeth to go away from God, as every worldly pain which is not for the health of the soul. Wherefore, in the Gospel it is written of the three Marys in this manner, "That coming, they might anoint Jesus, but not going." These three Marys, it is said, that is, these bitternesses, were coming to anoint our Lord. Those sufferings are coming to anoint our Lord which we endure for his sake. He stretcheth himself toward us as a thing that is anointed, and maketh himself tender and soft to handle. And was he not himself shut up in the maiden's womb?

These two things belong to an anchoress, narrowness and bitterness. For a womb is a narrow dwelling, where our Lord was shut up. And this word Mary, as has often been said, signifieth bitterness. If ye, then, in a narrow place endure bitterness, ye are like him—shut up, as he was in Mary's womb. Then, do ye, in a narrow place, endure bitterness, as he did in Mary's womb, when ye are confined within four large walls, and he in a narrow cradle—nailed to the cross—and in a tomb of stone closely confined. Mary's womb and this tomb were his anchorite houses, and in neither was he a man of this world, but, as it were, out of the world, to shew anchoresses that they ought to have nothing in common with the world. "Nay," thou answerest me and sayest, "but our Lord went out of both." Nay, go thou also out of both thine anchoress houses, as he did, without breaking out, and leave them both whole. That shall be when the spirit goeth out at last, without breach and without blemish, from his two houses. The one is the body, the other is the external house, which is as the outward wall about the castle.

All that I have said concerning the mortification of the flesh is not for you, my dear sisters, who, upon some occasions, suffer more than I could wish, but it

is for some one who will give this advice readily enough, who nevertheless handleth herself too softly. Men fence round with thorns young trees, lest beasts should gnaw them while they are tender. Ye are young trees planted in God's orchard. Thorns are the hardships which I have spoken of, and it is necessary for you that ye be fenced around with them, that the beast of hell, when he comes sneaking towards you to bite you, may hurt himself upon the hardness, and slink away from you. With all this hardness, be glad if ye are little spoken of, and if ye are disesteemed, for a thorn is sharp and disesteemed. With these two things be ye encompassed. Ye ought not to let any evil word proceed from you, for scandal is a mortal sin; and ye ought to let no evil word proceed from you any more than from the dead. And be glad in your heart if ye suffer insolence from Slurry, the cook's boy, who washeth dishes in the kitchen. Then are ye mountains exalted to heaven; for consider how the lady speaketh in that sweet love-book; "My love cometh," she saith, "leaping on the mountains, leaping over the hills." Mountains betoken those that lead the highest life, hills are the lower. Now, she saith that her love leapeth on the hills (mountains), that is, treadeth upon

them, and defileth them, and suffereth them to be trodden upon, and chastises them sharply: sheweth in them the footmarks upon his own person, in which men trode upon him, and they find how he was trodden upon, as the footmarks upon him shew. These are the high mountains, like the mountain of Montjoye and the mountains of Armenia. The hills, which are lower, which as the lady saith herself (himself) overleapeth, and doth not trust in them so much, on account of their weakness; because they could not bear to be so trodden upon, and therefore she (he) overleapeth them, and hath patience with them, and avoideth them until they be waxen higher, from hills to mountains. His shadow, however, passeth over and covereth them while he leapeth over them, that is, he layeth upon them some resemblance of his life on earth, as if it were his shadow. But the mountains receive the footmarks of himself, and exhibit in their life what manner of life he led—how and where he went—in how abject a condition—and in what pain he led his life on earth. Such a mountain was the good Paul, who said, "We are cast down, but we perish not; always bearing about in our body the mortification of Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our bodies."

" We suffer," saith St. Paul, " all pain and all shame." But it is our happiness that we bear in our body the likeness of Jesus Christ's death, that it may be shewn in us of what nature was his life on earth. God knoweth ! they that act thus prove their love towards our Lord. " Lovest thou me ? Shew it ; for love will shew itself by outward acts." St. Gregory saith. " The proof of love is the manifestation of its effect." Nothing is ever so hard that love doth not make tender, and soft, and sweet. " Love maketh all things easy." What do men and women endure for false love ! and would endure more ! And what is more to be wondered at is, that the love which is faithful and true, and sweeter than any other love may not overmaster us so much as doth sinful love ! Yet, I know a man who weareth at the same time both a heavy cuirass and haircloth, bound with iron about the middle too, and his arms with broad and thick bands, so that to bear the sweat of it is severe suffering ; he fasteth, he watcheth, he laboureth, and, Christ knoweth, he complaineth and saith that it doth not oppress him, and often asks me to teach him something wherewith he might give his body pain. God knoweth, yet he, the most sorrowful of men, weepeth to me and saith that God hath quite for-

gotten him, because he sendeth him no great sickness. Whatever is bitter seems sweet to him for our Lord's sake. God knoweth, love doth this, because, as he often saith to me, he could never love God the less for any evil thing that He might do to him, even were he to cast him into hell with those who perish. And if any man confidently believe any such thing of him, he is more confounded than a thief taken with his theft. I know also a woman of like mind who suffereth little less. And what remains but to thank God for the strength that he giveth them? And let us humbly acknowledge our own weakness, and love their merit, and thus it becomes our own. "For," as St. Gregory saith, "love is of so great power that it maketh the merit of others our own without labour." I think we are now come to the seventh part, which is all of love, which maketh a pure heart. Here beginneth—

PART VII.—Of Love.

ST. PAUL witnesseth that all outward hardships, and all pains of the flesh, and all bodily labours, are as nothing when compared with love, which purifieth and brighteneth the heart: "Bodily diligence is of little profit; but a sweet and clean heart is profitable to all things." "Though I know," saith he, "all the tongues of men and angels; and though I inflicted upon my body all the pains, and all the sufferings that a body could endure; and though I gave poor men all that I had; unless I had therewith love to God and to all men, in him and for him, it were all lost." For as the holy abbot Moyses saith, "All the pain and all the hardships that we suffer in the flesh, and all the good we do—all such things are but as tools with which to cultivate the heart. If the axe did not cut, nor the spade delve, nor the ploughshare plough, who would care to have them?" In like manner, as no man loveth tools for themselves, but for the things which are done with them, so, no pain of the flesh is

to be loved, unless on this account, that God may the sooner regard this with his grace, and make the heart pure and of clear sight; which none can have with an intermixture of vices, nor with earthly affection towards the things of the world; for this mixing so distorts the eyes of the heart that it cannot know God, nor be glad at his sight. "A pure heart," as St. Bernard saith, "doth two things, it maketh thee to do whatever thou doest, either for the love of God only, or for the good or benefit of another." In all that thou doest, have one of these two intents, or both together, for the latter coincides with the former. Keep thy heart always thus pure, and do all that thou wilt. Have a perverse heart, and every thing is evil with thee. The apostle saith, "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled is nothing pure." And St. Austin, "Have charity and do whatsoever thou wilt, that is, by the will of reason." Wherefore, my dear sisters, endeavour, above all things, to have a pure heart. What is a pure heart? I have told you before: it is that ye neither desire nor love any thing but God only, and those things, for God, that assist you to come to him. I say ye are to love them for God, and not for themselves—as food and clothing, and man or woman from whom

ye receive benefits; for, as St. Austin saith, and speaketh thus to our Lord, "Lord, she loveth thee less who loveth any thing but thee, unless she love it for thee." Pureness of heart is the love of God only. In this is the whole strength of all religious professions, and the end of all religious orders. "Love fulfilleth the law," saith St. Paul. "All God's commands," as St. Gregory saith, "are rooted in love." Love alone shall be laid in St. Michael's balance. They who love most shall be most blessed, not they who lead the most austere life, for love outweigheth this. Love is heaven's steward, on account of her great liberality, for she retains nothing for herself, but giveth all that she hath, and even herself, otherwise God would not esteem any of the things that were hers.

God hath deserved our love in every way. He hath done much for us, and hath promised more. A great gift attracts love, and he gave us much. He gave us the whole world in our father Adam. And all that is in the world he cast under our feet—beasts and fowls, before we had sinned. "Thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, moreover the beasts also of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea," etc. And besides, as has been

already said, all that is serveth the good, to the profit of the soul: moreover, the earth, the sea, and the sun serve the evil. He did yet more: he gave us not only of his own things, but he gave us himself. So noble a gift was never given to such abject wretches. The apostle St. Paul saith, "Christ so loved his spouse that he gave for her the price of himself." Observe carefully, my dear sisters, why we ought to love him. First, as a man that wooeth—as a king that loved a lady of a distant land, and sent before him his ambassadors to her, which were the patriarchs and the prophets of the Old Testament, with sealed letters. At last he came himself, and brought the Gospel, as letters opened, and wrote with his own blood salvation to his beloved as a love-greeting, to woo her with, and to obtain her love. To this belongs a tale, and a lesson under the cover of a similitude.

There was a lady who was besieged by her foes within an earthen castle, and her land all destroyed, and herself quite poor. The love of a powerful king was, however, fixed upon her with such boundless affection, that to solicit her love he sent his ambassadors, one after another, and often many together, and sent her jewels both many and fair, and supplies

of victuals, and the aid of his noble army to keep her castle. She received them all as a careless creature, that was so hard-hearted that he could never get any nearer to her love. What wouldest thou more? He came himself at last and shewed her his fair face, as one who was of all men the most beautiful to behold; and spoke most sweetly, and such pleasant words, that they might have raised the dead from death to life. And he wrought many miracles, and did many wondrous works before her eyes, and shewed her his power, told her of his kingdom, and offered to make her queen of all that belonged to him. All this availed nothing. Was not this disdain a marvellous thing? For she was never worthy to be his scullion. But, through his goodness and gentleness, love so overmastered him that he at last said, "Lady, thou art attacked, and thy enemies are so strong that, without help of me, thou canst not by any means escape their hands, so that they may not put thee to a shameful death. I will, for the love of thee, take upon me this fight, and deliver thee from those who seek thy death, yet I know assuredly that among them I shall receive a mortal wound, and I will gladly receive it to win thy heart. Now then, I beseech thee, for the love that I shew thee, that thou love me, at least after

being thus done to death, since thou wouldst not in my life-time." This king did so in every point. He delivered her from all her enemies, and was himself grievously maltreated, and at last slain. But, by a miracle, he arose from death to life. Would not this lady be of a most perverse nature, if she did not love him, after this, above all things ?

This king is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who in this manner wooed our soul, which the devils had besieged. And he, as a noble wooer, after many messengers, and many good deeds, came to prove his love, and shewed by his knightly prowess that he was worthy of love, as knights were sometimes wont to do. He engaged in a tournament, and had, for his lady's love, his shield everywhere pierced in battle, like a valorous knight. This shield which covered his godhead was his dear body, that was extended on the cross, broad as a shield above, in his outstretched arms, and narrow beneath, because, as men suppose, the one foot was placed upon the other foot. That this shield had no sides is to signify that his disciples, who ought to have stood by him and be his sides, all fled from him and forsook him as an alien, as the Gospel saith, "They all forsook him and fled." This shield is given us against all temptations, as

Jeremiah testifieth, "Thou shall give them a buckler of heart, thy labour." And the Psalmist, "Thou hast crowned us as with a shield of thy good will." This shield defends us not only from all evils, but doth yet more, it crowneth us in heaven. "O Lord," saith David, "with the shield of thy good will." For, willingly did he suffer all that he suffered. Isaiah saith, "He was offered because it was his own will." But, "O Lord," thou sayest, "why?" Could he not have delivered us with less trouble? Yes, indeed, full easily, but he would not. Wherefore? To take away from us every excuse for not loving him who redeemed us at so dear a price. Men buy for an easy price a thing for which they care little. He bought us with his heart's blood, a dearer price there never was, that he might draw out of us our love toward him which cost him so dear. There are three things in a shield, the wood, the leather, and the painting. So was there in this shield; the wood of the cross, the leather of God's body, and the painting of the red blood which stained it so fully. Again, the third reason. After the death of a valiant knight, men hang up his shield high in the church, to his memory. So is this shield, that is the crucifix, set up in the church, in such a place in which it may

be soonest seen, thereby to remind us of Jesus Christ's knighthood, which he practised on the cross. His spouse beholdeth thereon how he bought her love, and let his shield be pierced, that is, let his side be opened to shew her his heart, and to shew her openly how deeply he loved her, and to draw her heart to him.

Four principal kinds of love are found in this world. The first is between virtuous friends; the second is between man and woman; the third, between a woman and her child; the fourth, between body and soul. The love which Jesus Christ hath to his dear spouse surpasseth them all four, and excelleth them all. Do not men account him a good friend who layeth his pledge in Jewry to release his companion? God Almighty laid himself in Jewry for us, and gave up his precious body to release his spouse out of the hands of the Jews. Never did friend give such a surety for his own friend. There is much love often between man and woman. But, although she were married to him, she might become so depraved, and might so long be unfaithful to him with other men, that though she were willing to return to him, he would not receive her. And therefore Christ loveth more; for though the soul, his spouse, should be unfaithful to him with the fiend of hell, in mortal

sin many years and days, his mercy is ever ready for her, whensoever she will come to him, and renounce the devil. All this he saith himself by Jeremiah, "If a man put away his wife and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? But thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me, saith the Lord." He still saith all the day, "Thou who hast done so wickedly, turn thee and come again, welcome shalt thou be to me." "He even runneth to meet her returning," and immediately throweth his arms about her neck. What greater mercy can there be? Yet here is a more joyful wonder. Though his spouse were polluted with so many deadly sins, as soon as she cometh to him again, he maketh her again a virgin. "For," as St. Austin saith, "so great a difference is there between God's communion with the soul, and man's with woman, that man's communion maketh of a maiden a wife, and God maketh of a wife a maiden." "He hath given me again," saith Job, "all that I had before." These two things, good works and true faith, are maidenhood in the soul. Now, concerning the third kind of love: If a child had a disease of such a nature, that a bath of blood were required for him before he could be healed, that

mother must love him greatly who would make this bath for him with her own blood. Our Lord did this for us who were so sick with sin, and so defiled with it, that nothing could heal us or cleanse us but his blood only; for so he would have it; his love made us a bath thereof; blessed may he be for-ever! He prepared three baths for his dear spouse, in which to wash herself so white and so fair that she might be worthy of his pure embraces. The first bath is baptism; the second is tears, inward and outward, after the nature of the first bath, if she defile herself with sin; the third bath is the blood of Jesus Christ, that sanctifieth both the other two, as St. John saith in the Apocalypse, "Who loved us and washed us in his own blood;" that is, he loved us more than any mother doth her child. He saith this himself by Isaiah, "Can a mother forget her child? and though she do, I can never forget thee:" and he then telleth the reason why, "I have painted thee," saith he, "in my hands." He did so with red blood upon the cross. A man ties a knot upon his belt, that he may be reminded of any thing; but our Lord, that he might never forget us, made a mark of piercing in both his hands. Now concerning the fourth love. The soul loveth the body very greatly, and that is easily

seen in their separation; for dear friends are sorry when they must separate. But our Lord, of his own accord, separated his soul from his body, that he might join our body and soul together, world without end, in the blessedness of heaven. Thus, behold how the love of Jesus Christ toward his dear spouse, that is, holy church, or the pure soul, surpasseth and excelleth the four greatest loves that are found on earth! With all this love he still wooeth her in this manner.

Thy love, saith our Lord, is either to be altogether freely given, or it is to be sold, or it is to be stolen and taken by force. If it is to be given, where couldst thou bestow it better than upon me? Am not I the fairest thing? Am not I the richest king? Am not I of the noblest birth? Am not I the wisest of the wealthy? Am not I the most courteous of men? Am not I the most liberal of men? For it is commonly said of a liberal man that he cannot withhold any thing—that he hath his hands, as mine are, perforated. Am not I of all things the sweetest and most gentle? Thus, thou mayest find in me all the reasons for which love ought to be given, especially if thou lovest chaste purity; for no one can love me except she retain that. If thy love is not to be given,

but thou wilt by all means that it be bought, do say how. Either with other love, or with somewhat else? Love is rightly sold for love; and so love ought to be sold, and for nothing else. If thy love is thus to be sold, I have bought it with love that surpasseth all other love. For, of the four principal kinds of love I have manifested toward thee the chiefest of them all. And if thou sayest that thou wilt not set so light a value upon it, but thou wilt have yet more, name what it shall be. Set a price upon thy love. Thou shalt not say so much that I will not give thee for thy love much more. Wouldest thou have castles and kingdoms? Wouldest thou govern the whole world? I will do better for thee. In addition to all this, I will make thee queen of heaven. Thou shalt be sevenfold brighter than the sun; no disease shall harm thee; nothing shall vex thee; no joy shall be wanting to thee; all thy will shall be done in heaven and in earth; yea, and even in hell. Heart shall never think of such great felicity, that I will not give more for thy love, immeasurably and infinitely more—all the wealth of Crœsus; and the fair beauty of Absalom, who, as often as his hair was polled the clippings were sold—the hair that was cut off—for two hundred shekels of silver; the swift-

ness of Asahel, who strove in speed with a hart; the strength of Samson, who slew a thousand of his enemies at one time, and alone, without a companion; Cæsar's liberality; Alexander's renown; the dignity of Moses. Would not a man, for one of these, give all that he possessed? And all these things together, compared with my offer, are not worth a needle. And, if thou art so obstinately self-willed and void of understanding, that thou, without losing any thing, refusest such gain, with every kind of felicity, Lo! I hold here a sharp sword over thy head, to divide life and soul, and to plunge both into the fire of hell, to be there the devil's paramour, disgracefully and sorrowfully, world without end. Now answer me, and defend thyself against me if thou canst, or grant me thy love, which I so earnestly desire, not for my own, but for thy own great behoof.

Lo! thus doth our Lord woo: and is not she too hard-hearted that such a wooer cannot turn her love to him, and especially if she reflect upon these three things: what he is, and what she is, and how great is the love of one so exalted as he is toward one so low as she is. Wherefore, the Psalmist saith, "There is no one who may withdraw herself so that she may not love him." The true sun in the morning tide

ascended up on the high cross for the purpose of diffusing the warm rays of his love over all; so earnestly solicitous was he, and is to this day, to kindle his love in the heart of his beloved; and he saith in the Gospel, "I came," saith he, "to bring fire into the earth, that is, burning love into earthly hearts, and what else do I desire but that it blaze?" Lukewarm love is loathsome to him, as he saith by St. John in the Apocalypse: "I would," saith he to his beloved, "that thou wert, in my love, either altogether cold, or hot withal; but because thou art as if lukewarm, between the two, neither cold nor hot, thou makest me to loathe, and I will vomit thee out, except thou become hotter."

My dear sisters, ye have now heard how, and for what reason, God is greatly to be loved. To kindle this love in you rightly, gather wood for that purpose, with the poor woman of Sarepta, the town the name whereof signifieth kindling. "Lord," saith she to Elijah the holy prophet, "behold I am gathering two sticks." These two sticks betoken that one stick which stood upright, and that other also of the precious cross, which enwt athwart it. With these two sticks ye ought to kindle the fire of love within your hearts. Look often upon them. Think whether ye ought not

joyfully to love the King of Glory, who so stretches out his arms toward you, and bows down his head as if to offer you a kiss. Of a truth I say unto you that if the true Elijah, which is God Almighty, find you diligently gathering those two sticks, he will make his abode with you, and multiply in you his precious grace; as Elijah did to the poor woman whom he found gathering two sticks at Sarepta, who supplied her with food, and became her guest.

Greek fire is made of the blood of a red man, and it is said that nothing can quench it but urine, and sand, and vinegar. This Greek fire is the love of our Lord, and ye shall make it of the blood of a red man, which is, Jesus Christ reddened with his own blood on the cross. And he was ruddy also naturally, as it is believed. This blood, shed for you on the painful two sticks, shall make you Sareptians; that is, inflame you with this Greek fire, that, as Solomon saith, no waters, which are worldly temptations, nor tribulations, neither internal nor external, can quench this love. Now, then, nothing remains, but to keep yourselves cautiously from every thing that quenches it, namely urine, and sand, and vinegar. Urine is stench of sin. On sand nothing good groweth, and it betokeneth idleness; and idleness cooleth and

quencheth this fire. Be always active and alive to good works, and this will warm you and kindle this fire in opposition to the flame of sin. For, as one nail driveth out another, so doth the flame of the love of God drive the fire of foul desire out of the heart. The third thing is vinegar, that is, a heart sour with malice and hatred. Understand this saying: when the malicious Jews offered our Lord this sour present on the cross, then said he that sorrowful word, "It is finished!" "Never till now," said he, "were my sufferings complete;" not through the vinegar, but through their hateful malice, which that vinegar betokeneth, which they made him drink. And this is as if a man who had laboured long, and, after his painful toil, had been at last disappointed of his hire. Thus, our Lord, more than two-and-thirty years, toiled for their love, and for all his painful labour desired nothing but love as hire; yet, at the end of his life, which was, as it were, in the evening, when men pay workmen their day's hire, behold how they paid him! instead of balm of sweet honey-love, vinegar of sour malice, and gall of bitter hatred. "Oh," said our Lord then, "it is finished!" All my toil on earth, and all my pain on the cross, does not at all grieve nor distress me in comparison

of this—that for this I have done all that I have done. This vinegar that ye offer me, this sour requital, completeth my sufferings. This vinegar of a sour heart and of bitter thanks, more than all other things, quencheth Greek fire, that is, the love of our Lord; and she who beareth it in her breast toward man or toward woman is the Jew's mate. She is still offering to God this vinegar, and completing, for her part, his sufferings on the cross. Men cast Greek fire upon their foemen, and thus conquer them; and ye should do the same when God raiseth up any war against you from any enemy. Solomon teacheth you how ye ought to throw it, "If thy foe is hungry, give him food; and if he is athirst, give him to drink;" which meaneth that if, after having done thee harm, he is hungry or thirsty, give him the food of thy prayers that God may have mercy upon him; and give him the drink of tears. Weep for his sins. Thus thou shalt, saith Solomon, heap on his head burning coals: that is to say, thus thou shalt enkindle his heart that he shall love thee; for, in Holy Scripture, by head we are to understand heart. In this manner will God say, in the day of judgment, "Why lovedst thou that man or that woman?" "Lord, because they loved me." "Yea," he will say, "thou didst pay

what thou owedst: in this case I have not much to repay thee." But, if thou canst answer and say, "Lord, I loved them for thy sake;" he owes thee that love, because it was given to him, and he will repay it thee.

Urine, which, as I said before, quencheth Greek fire, is stinking carnal love that quencheth spiritual love, which Greek fire betokeneth. What flesh on earth was so sweet and so holy as that of Jesus Christ? And yet, he said himself to his dear disciples, "Unless I depart from you, the Holy Ghost, which is mine and my Father's love, cannot come to you; but, when I am gone from you, I will send him unto you." Since Jesus Christ's own disciples, while they loved him in the flesh, being nigh him, did not possess the sweetness of the Holy Ghost, and could not have both together—judge yourselves, is not he or she mad who loveth too much her own flesh, or any man carnally, so that she desire too fondly to see him, or to speak with him? Let her never wonder though she have not the consolation of the Holy Spirit. Let every one choose now between earthly and heavenly comfort, to which of the two she will keep; for she must relinquish one of them, because in the mingling of these two she can never have pureness of heart; which

is, as we said before, the goodness and the strength of all professions, and of every religious order. Love maketh her sincere, and peaceful, and pure. Love hath the superiority over all other things, for all the things that she toucheth she turns to her, and maketh them all her own. "Whatsoever place your foot shall tread upon," that is to say, the foot of love, "shall be yours." Many a man would buy at a great price a thing of such a nature that whatever he touched with it became his own. And, said I not before, that merely by loving the good that is in another man—with the touching of thy love—thou makest, without other labour, his good thy own good, as St. Gregory sheweth? Consider now, how much good the envious lose. Extend thy love to Jesus Christ, and thou hast gained him. Touch him with as much love as thou, sometimes, hast for some man, and he is thine, to do all that thou desirest. But who loveth a thing, and yet parteth with it for less than it is worth? Is not God incomparably better than all that is in the world? Charity—that is the love of a thing which is dear and precious. He hath little love to God, and feels not how precious he is, who, for any worldly love, bartereth his love; because nothing can love rightly but he alone. So exceedingly

doth he delight in love that he maketh her his equal, and I dare to say still more—he maketh her his master, and doth whatever she commands, as if he must needs do it. Can I prove this? Yes, indeed I can, from his own words. For thus he speaketh to Moses, the man who loved him most, in the Book of Numbers; "I have pardoned according to thy word;" he saith not "according to thy prayers." "I had intended," said he to Moses, "to wreak my anger upon this people, but thou sayest that I must not: be it according to thy word." It is said that love bindeth. In truth, love so bindeth our Lord that he can do nothing but by the permission of love. Now, I prove it, for it seems wonderful: "Lord, there is none that riseth up and taketh hold of thee." Isaiah. "Lord, wilt thou smite?" saith Isaiah, "ah! thou well mayest; for there is none that may hold thee." As if he said, "If any one loved thee truly, he might hold thee, and hinder thee from smiting." In Genesis, to Lot, "Make haste, etc., for I cannot do anything till thou go out from thence:" that is, when our Lord would have destroyed Sodom, wherein Lot his friend dwelt, our Lord said, "Hasten thee away out, for while thou art among them, nothing can be done to them." Was not this being bound with love? What wouldest

thou more? Love is his chamberlain, his counsellor, and his bride, from whom he can conceal nothing, but telleth her all his thoughts. In Genesis, "Can I," said our Lord, "hide from Abraham the thing that I purpose to do?" No, said he, in no wise. Doth not he know how to love rightly who thus speaketh and thus doth to all men who in their hearts believe and love him? As the joy which he is preparing for them is not to be compared to all worldly joys, so is it not to be described by all worldly tongues. Isaiah, "Neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." Concerning those joys ye have something written in another place, my dear sisters. This love is the rule which regulates the heart. "I will praise thee with uprightness of heart:" that is, in the regulation of my heart. The reproach of the wicked is, that they are "a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not faithful to God." This rule is the lady or mistress. All the others serve her, and for her sake alone they ought to be loved. I make little account of them provided this be worthily kept. Ye have them briefly, however, in the eighth part.

PART VIII.—Of Domestic Matters.

I SAID before, at the commencement, that ye ought not, like unwise people, to promise to keep any of the external rules. I say the same still; nor do I write them for any but you alone. I say this in order that other anchoresses may not say that I, by my own authority, make new rules for them. Nor do I command that they observe them, and ye may even change them, whenever ye will, for better ones. In regard to things of this kind that have been in use before, it matters little.

Of sight, and of speech, and of the other senses enough was said. Now this last part, as I promised you at the commencement, is divided and separated into seven small sections.

Men esteem a thing as less dainty when they have it often, and therefore ye should be, as lay brethren are, partakers of the holy communion only fifteen times a-year: at Mid-winter; Candlemas; Twelfth-day; on Sunday half-way between that and Easter,

or our Lady's day, if it is near the Sunday, because of its being a holiday; Easter-day; the third Sunday thereafter; Holy Thursday; Whitsunday; and Midsummer day; St. Mary Magdalen's day; the Assumption; the Nativity; St. Michael's day; All Saints' day; St. Andrew's day. And before all these days, see that ye make a full confession and undergo discipline; but never from any man, only from yourselves. And forego your pittance for one day. And if any thing happens out of the usual order, so that ye may not have received the sacrament at these set times, ye may make up for it the Sunday next following, or if the other set time is near, ye may wait till then.

Ye shall eat twice every day from Easter until the Holyrood day, the later, which is in harvest, except on Fridays, and Ember days, and procession days and vigils. In those days, and in the Advent, ye shall not eat any thing white, except necessity require it. The other half year ye shall fast always, except only on Sundays.

Ye shall eat no flesh nor lard except in great sickness; or whosoever is infirm may eat potage without scruple; and accustom yourselves to little drink. Nevertheless, dear sisters, your meat and your drink have seemed

to me less than I would have it. Fast no day upon bread and water, except ye have leave. There are anchoresses who make their meals with their friends outside the convent. That is too much friendship, because, of all orders, then is it most ungenial, and most contrary to the order of an anchoress, who is quite dead to the world. We have often heard it said that dead men speak with living men; but that they eat with living men, I have never yet found. Make ye no banquetings, nor encourage any strange vagabond fellows to come to the gate; though no other evil come of it but their immoderate talking, it might sometimes prevent heavenly thoughts.

It is not fit that an anchoress should be liberal of other men's alms. Would we not laugh loud to scorn a beggar who should invite men to a feast? Mary and Martha were two sisters, but their lives were different. Ye anchorites have taken to yourselves Mary's part, whom our Lord himself commended. "Mary hath chosen the best part. Martha, Martha," said he, "thou art much cumbered. Mary hath chosen better, and nothing shall take her part from her." Housewifery is Martha's part, and Mary's part is quietness and rest from all the world's din, that nothing may hinder her from hearing the voice of

God. And observe what God saith, "that nothing shall take away this part from you." Martha hath her office; let her alone, and sit ye with Mary stone-still at God's feet, and listen to him alone. Martha's office is to feed and clothe poor men, as the mistress of a house. Mary ought not to intermeddle in it, and if any one blame her, God himself supreme defendeth her for it, as holy writ beareth witness. On the other hand, an anchoress ought to take sparingly only that which is necessary for her. Whereof, then, may she make herself liberal? She must live upon alms, as frugally as ever she can, and not gather that she may give it away afterwards. She is not a housewife, but a church anchoress. If she can spare any fragments for the poor, let her send them quite privately out of her dwelling. Sin is oft concealed under the semblance of goodness. And how shall those rich anchoresses that are tillers of the ground, or have fixed rents, do their alms privately to poor neighbours? Desire not to have the reputation of bountiful anchoresses, nor, in order to give much, be too eager to possess more. Greediness is the root of bitterness: all the boughs that spring from it are bitter. To beg in order to give away is not the part of an anchoress. From the courtesy of an anchoress,

and from her liberality, sin and shame have often come in the end.

Make women and children who have laboured for you to eat whatever food you can spare from your own meals; but let no man eat in your presence, except he be in great need; nor invite him to drink any thing. Nor do I desire that ye should be told that ye are courteous anchoresses. From a good friend take whatever ye have need of when she offereth it to you; but for no invitation take any thing without need, lest ye get the name of gathering anchoresses. Of a man whom ye distrust, receive ye neither less nor more—not so much as a race of ginger. It must be great need that shall drive you to ask any thing; yet humbly shew your distress to your dearest friend.

Ye shall not possess any beast, my dear sisters, except only a cat. An anchoress that hath cattle appears as Martha was, a better housewife than anchoress; nor can she in any wise be Mary, with peacefulness of heart. For then she must think of the cow's fodder, and of the herdsman's hire, flatter the heyward, defend herself when her cattle is shut up in the pinfold, and moreover pay the damage. Christ knoweth, it is an odious thing when people in the town complain of anchoresses' cattle. If, how-

ever, any one must needs have a cow, let her take care that she neither annoy nor harm any one, and that her own thoughts be not fixed thereon. An anchoress ought not to have any thing that draweth her heart outward. Carry ye on no traffic. An anchoress that is a buyer and seller selleth her soul to the chapman of hell. Do not take charge of other men's property in your house, nor of their cattle, nor their clothes, neither receive under your care the church vestments, nor the chalice, unless force compel you, or great fear, for oftentimes much harm has come from such care-taking. Let no man sleep within your walls. If, however, great necessity should cause your house to be used, see that, as long as it is used, ye have therein with you a woman of unspotted life day and night.

Because no man seeth you, nor do ye see any man, ye may be well content with your clothes, be they white, be they black; only see that they be plain, and warm, and well made—skins well tawed; and have as many as you need, for bed and also for back.

Next your flesh ye shall wear no flaxen cloth, except it be of hards and of coarse canvas. Whoso will may have a stamin, and whoso will may be without it. Ye shall sleep in a garment and girt. Wear no iron, nor haircloth, nor hedgehog-skins; and do not beat

yourselves therewith, nor with a scourge of leather thongs, nor leaded; and do not with holly nor with briars cause yourselves to bleed without leave of your confessor; and do not, at one time, use too many flagellations. Let your shoes be thick and warm. In summer ye are at liberty to go and to sit barefoot, and to wear hose without vamps, and whoso liketh may lie in them. A woman may well enough wear drawers of haircloth very well tied, with the strapples reaching down to her feet, laced tightly. If ye would dispense with wimples, have warm capes, and over them black veils. She who wishes to be seen, it is no great wonder though she adorn herself; but, in the eyes of God, she is more lovely who is unadorned outwardly for his sake. Have neither ring, nor broach, nor ornamented girdle, nor gloves, nor any such thing that is not proper for you to have.

I am always the more gratified, the coarser the works are that ye do. Make no purses, to gain friends therewith, nor blodbendes of silk; but shape, and sew, and mend church vestments, and poor people's clothes. Ye shall give nothing away without leave from your father confessor. Assist with your own labour, as far as ye are able, to clothe yourselves and your domestics, as St. Jerome teacheth. Be never

idle; for the fiend immediately offers his work to her who is not diligent in God's work; and he beginneth directly to talk to her. For, while he seeth her busy, he thinketh thus: It would avail nothing if I were now to accost her, nor would she take time to listen to my teaching. From idleness ariseth much temptation of the flesh, "All the wickedness of Sodom came of idleness, and of a full belly." Iron that lieth still soon gathereth rust; and water that is not stirred soon stinketh. An anchoress must not become a schoolmistress, nor turn her anchoress-house into a school for children. Her maiden may, however, teach any little girl concerning whom it might be doubtful whether she should learn among boys, but an anchoress ought to give her thoughts to God only.

Ye shall not send, nor receive, nor write letters without leave. Ye shall have your hair cut four times a-year to disburden your head; and be let blood as oft, and oftener if it is necessary; but if any one can dispense with this, I may well suffer it. When ye are let blood, ye ought to do nothing that may be irksome to you for three days; but talk with your maidens, and divert yourselves together with instructive tales. Ye may often do so when ye feel dispirited, or are grieved about some worldly matter, or sick. Thus

wisely take care of yourselves when you are let blood, and keep yourselves in such rest that long thereafter ye may labour the more vigorously in God's service, and also when ye feel any sickness, for it is great folly, for the sake of one day, to lose ten or twelve. Wash yourselves wheresoever it is necessary, as often as ye please.

When an anchoress hath not her food at hand, let two women be employed, one who stays always at home, another who goes out when necessary; and let her be very plain, or of sufficient age; and, by the way, as she goeth let her go singing her prayers; and hold no conversation with man or with woman; nor sit, nor stand, except the least possible, until she come home. Let her go nowhere else, but to the place whither she is sent. Without leave, let her neither eat nor drink abroad. Let the other be always within, and never go out of the gate without leave. Let both be obedient to their dame in all things, sin only excepted. Let them possess nothing unknown to their mistress, nor accept nor give any thing without her permission. They must not let any man in; nor must the younger speak with any man without leave; nor go out of town without a trusty companion, nor sleep out. If she cannot

read her hours in a book, let her say them with Paternosters and Ave Marias; and do the work that she is commanded to do, without grudging. Let her have her ears always open to her mistress. Let neither of the women either carry to her mistress or bring from her any idle tales, or new tidings, nor sing to one another, nor speak any worldly speeches, nor laugh, nor play, so that any man who saw it might turn it to evil. Above all things, they ought to hate lying and ribaldry. Let their hair be cut short, their headcloth sit low. Let each lie alone. Let their hesmel be high pointed: none to wear a broach. Let no man see them unveiled, nor without a hood. Let them look low. They ought not to kiss, nor lovingly embrace any man, neither of their acquaintance nor a stranger, nor to wash their head, nor to look fixedly on any man, nor to romp nor frolic with him. Their garments should be of such a shape and all their attire such that it may be easily seen to what life they are dedicated. Let them observe cautiously their manners, so that nobody may find fault with them, neither in the house nor out of the house. Let them, by all means, forbear to vex their mistress; and, whenever they do so, let them before they either eat or drink make obeisance on their knees bending to the earth

before her and say, "Mea culpa;" and accept the penance that she layeth upon them, bowing low. And let not the anchoress ever again thereafter upbraid her with the same fault, when vexed, except she soon afterwards fall into the same, but drive it entirely out of her heart. And if any strife ariseth between the women, let the anchoress cause them to make obeisance to each other kneeling to the earth, and the one to raise up the other, and finally to kiss each other; and let the anchoress impose some penance on both, but more upon her who is most in fault. Be ye well assured, this is a thing most pleasing to God—peace and concord—and most hateful to the fiend; and, therefore, he is always endeavouring to stir up some strife. Now the devil seeth well that when the fire is fairly blazing, and men wish it to go out, they separate the brands: and he doth, in regard to this, just the same thing. Love is Jesus Christ's fire, which he would have to burn in our hearts, and the devil bloweth that he may puff it out; and when his blowing is of no avail, he then bringeth up some insulting word, or some other mark of contempt, whereby they are repelled from each other, and the flame of the Holy Spirit is quenched, when the brands, through anger, are sundered. And, therefore, keep them firmly

united in love, and be not away from them when the fiend may blow; and especially, if there be many joined together, and well kindled with love.

Though the anchoress impose penance on her maidens for open faults, let them nevertheless confess often to the priest; but always, however, with permission. And if they cannot say the graces at meals, let them say, instead of them, Paternoster and Ave Maria, before and also after meat, and the Creed over and above; and in conclusion say thus, "May the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God Almighty, give our mistress his grace, always more and more, and grant to her and us both to have a good ending, and reward all who do us good, and be merciful to the souls of them who have done us good—to the souls of them and of all Christians. Amen." Between meals, do not munch either fruit or any thing else; and drink not without leave; but let the leave be easily granted in all those matters where there is no sin. At meat let there be no talking, or little, and then be still. Also, neither do nor say any thing after the anchoress' compline, until prime next morning, whereby her silence might be disturbed. No servant of an anchoress ought, properly, to ask stated wages, except food and clothing, with which, and with God's

mercy, she may do well enough. Let her not disbelieve any good of the anchoress, whatever betide, as that she may deceive her. The maidens out of doors, if they serve the anchoress in such a manner as they ought, shall have their reward in the eternal blessedness of heaven. Whoso hath any hope of so high a reward will gladly serve, and easily endure all grief and all pain. With ease and abundance men do not arrive at heaven.

Ye anchoresses ought to read these little concluding parts to your women once every week until they know it well. And it is very necessary for you both that ye take much care of them, for ye may be much benefited by them; and, on the other hand, made worse. If they sin through your negligence, ye shall be called to give account of it before the Supreme Judge; and, therefore, it is very necessary for you, and still more for them, that ye diligently teach them to keep their rule, both for your sake and for themselves; in a gentle manner, however, and affectionately; for such ought the instructing of women to be—affectionate and gentle, and seldom stern. It is right that they should both fear and love you; but that there should be always more of love than of fear. Then it shall go well. Both wine and oil should be poured into

the wounds, according to divine instruction; but more of the soft oil than of the biting wine; that is, more of gentle than of vehement words; for thereof cometh that which is best—love-fear. Mildly and kindly forgive them their faults when they acknowledge them and promise amendment.

As far as ye can, in regard to drink, and food, and clothing, and other things which the wants of the flesh require, be liberal to them, though ye be the more strict and severe to yourselves; for so doth he that bloweth well: He turneth the narrow end of the horn to his own mouth, and the wide end outward. And do ye the like, as ye would that your prayers may resound like a trumpet, and make a sweet noise in the ears of the Lord; and not to your own salvation only, but to that of all people; which may our Lord grant through the grace of himself, that so it may be. Amen.

In this book read every day, when ye are at leisure—every day, less or more; for I hope that, if ye read it often, it will be very beneficial to you, through the grace of God, or else I shall have ill employed much of my time. God knows, it would be more agreeable to me to set out on a journey to Rome, than to begin to do it again. And, if ye find that ye do according

to what ye read, thank God earnestly; and if ye do not, pray for the grace of God, and diligently endeavour that ye may keep it better, in every point, according to your ability. May the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the one Almighty God, keep you under his protection! May he give you joy and comfort, my dear sisters, and for all that ye endure and suffer for him may he never give you a less reward than his entire self. May he be ever exalted from world to world, for ever and ever. Amen.

As often as ye read any thing in this book, greet the Lady with an Ave Mary for him who made this rule, and for him who wrote it, and took pains about it. Moderate enough I am, who ask so little.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES AND NOTES

p. 1, l. 1. Cant. i. 4.
p. 2, l. 6. 1 Tim. i. 5.
l. 7. Ps. xxxv. 11.
l. 12. *Ibid.* cxxiv. 4.
l. 14. *Ibid.* xxxii. 1.
l. 20. S. Aug. *Enarr. in Ps.* Migne (Patr. lat.), xxxvi. 277.
l. 21. Philipp. iii. 16.
p. 3, l. 5. 1 Tim. iv. 8.
p. 8, l. 1. Ep. of St. James i. 27.
l. 9. "Nigra sum sed formosa."

p. 10, l. 16. Micheas vi. 8, founded on the Latin text which in original is given.

p. 14, l. 8. Tu esto nostrum gaudium, etc. The first four lines are from the hymn for Lauds on Ascension-day.

p. 15, l. 18. "Hallowed," *i. e.* consecrated by the solemn rite of the Church.

p. 16, l. 15. Cant. Trium Puerorum, Dan. iii.

p. 17, l. 1. Mass Creed, *i. e.* the Nicene Creed said in the Mass.

p. 17, l. 11. *Pretiosa*, the beginning of the second part of the Office of Prime, usually said in the chapter-room in Religious houses.

p. 18, l. 3. *Placebo*, the first word in the Office of Vespers for the Dead, and so used to denote the whole office, like *Dirige*, the first word of the first nocturn at Matins used to denote the whole Matins.

p. 18, l. 18. "Commendation," *i.e.* Prayers said for the dead.

p. 18, l. 23. "The fifteen Psalms," otherwise called the "Gradual Psalms." They were divided into three divisions: (1) Ps. cxix.—cxxiii.; (2) Ps. cxxiv.—cxxviii.; (3) Ps. cxxix.—cxxxiii.

p. 19, l. 20. *Fidelium*, the first word of the prayer for the dead. Fidelium Deus omnium Conditor et Redemptor, etc.

p. 19, l. 21. Seven Psalms, *i.e.* those called the Penitential Psalms: Ps. vi. xxxi. xxxvii. l. ci. cxxix. cxlii.

p. 19, l. 22. Undern time = nine o'clock in the morning.

p. 22. l. 10. Cruces, *i. e.* prayers to the Holy Cross, many of which were in common use from the earliest times.

p. 24, l. 11. Ps. cxxii.

p. 25, l. 16. *Ibid.* cxx.

p. 26, l. 23. *Ibid.* l.

p. 28, l. 12. *Ibid.* xcix.

p. 29, l. 3. *Ibid.* cxxii.

ll. 15-17. (1) Ps. lxv.; (2) Ps. cxxi.; (3) Ps. cxxiv.; (4) Ps. cxxx.; (5) Ps. cl.

p. 31, l. 7. Ps. cxix.

l. 21. *Ibid.* cxxix.

p. 32, l. 9. *Ibid.* cxxv.

l. 17. *Ibid.* cxxii.

p. 34, l. 20. The five are: Magnificat; Ad Dominum; Retribue; In Convertendo; Ad Te Levavi: the initial letters making Maria.

p. 38, l. 3. "All is hers," that is, she shall share in the benefit.

p. 40, l. 5. 2 Kings x. 2.

p. 49, l. 22. Ps. cxviii. 37.

l. 23. Job xxxi. 1.

p. 50, l. 5. Jer. xii. 51.

l. 11. Eccl. xxxi. 15.

p. 52, l. 24. Matt. vii. 15.

p. 55, l. 18. 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

p. 57, l. 4. Prov. xviii. 21.
l. 5. *Ibid.* xiii. 3.
l. 7. *Ibid.* xxv. 28.
l. 19. Ep. i. 26.
p. 58, l. 8. Prov. x. 19.
l. 24. Is. i. 15.
p. 59, l. 10. Luke i. 38.
l. 18. *Ibid.* i. 41.
l. 20. John ii. 9.
p. 60, l. 5. Ps. cxxxix. 12.
l. 6. *Ibid.* xxxviii. 2.
l. 10. Is. xxxii. 17.
l. 13. Wisd. i. 15.
l. 15. Is. xxx. 15.
p. 62, l. 15. Matt. xii. 36.
p. 63, l. 7. John viii. 44.
l. 20. Eccles. x. 11.
p. 68, l. 19. Zach. viii. 20.
l. 22. Exod. xx. 5.
l. 24. Wisd. i. 10.
p. 69, l. 7. Cant. of Cant. ii. 14.
p. 71, l. 5. Apoc. ii. 17.
p. 73, l. 1. Ps. cxviii. 85.
p. 74, l. 3. 2 Tim. ii. 17.
l. 9. Cant. of Cant. ii. 13, 14.
p. 75, l. 14. *Ibid.* i. 7.
p. 82, l. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 14, 15.
p. 84, l. 13. Luke xxii. 44.
p. 87, l. 24. Ecclus. vii. 40.
p. 89, l. 7. Ps. ci. 7.
p. 92, l. 26. Is. liii. 7.
p. 95, l. 20. Luke vi. 37.
p. 96, l. 8. Ps. xxxii. 7.
l. 18. Judith viii. 5, 6.
p. 97, l. 2. Matt. viii. 20.
l. 24. 3 Kings xxiv

p. 99, l. 18. Luke xvii. 10.
p. 101, l. 19. Ps. lviii. 10.
p. 102, l. 8. Job xxix. 18.
p. 104, l. 6. Deut. xxxii. 15.
l. 18. Levit. ii. 13.
p. 106, l. 6. Job xxviii. 25.
p. 108, l. 14. Ps. ci. 8.
l. 19. Ecclus. xxxi. 1.
l. 23. Matt. xxvi. 41.
p. 109, l. 1. Luke xii. 37.
l. 12. Matt. xii. 36.
p. 110, l. 23. Ps. lxxiii. 11.
p. 111, l. 10. Matt. vi. 2.
l. 21. Exodus iv. 6.
p. 112, l. 3. Job xix. 27.
l. 15. Joel i. 7.
p. 113, l. 25. Matt. xiii. 44.
p. 114, l. 19. Is. xxxix. 2.
l. 24. Matt. ii. 11.
p. 115, l. 14. Ps. ci. 7.
p. 116, l. 18. Gen. xxiv. 63.
p. 117, l. 13. Jer. xv. 17.
l 20. *Ibid.* ix. 1.
l. 25. *Ibid.* ix. 2.
p. 118, l. 10. Lament. iii. 23.
l 12. *Ibid.* 26.
l. 19. *Ibid.* 30.
p. 119, l. 5. Matt. xi. 11.
l. 21. Is. vi. 5.
p. 120, l. 24. Luke i. 28.
p. 123, l. 3. 1 Peter v. 3.
l. 12. *Healewi* is balsam.
l. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 7.
p. 124, l. 8. John xix. 26, 27. Virginem matrem virgini commendavit.
p. 124, l. 16. *Ibid.* xvi. 33.

p. 125, l. 1. Apoc. xii. 1.
l. 20. Matt. ix. 27.
p. 126, l. 9. Apoc. xiv. 4.
l. 15. Hosea ii. 14.
l 18. *Ibid.* xi. 9.
p. 128, l. 3. "Said above," *see* pp. 72–73.
l. 4. Ps. cxviii. 115.
l. 9. 3 Kings ii. 36–46.
p. 134, l. 2 Apoc. iii. 17.
p. 136, l. 14. St. James i. 12.
p. 138, l. 23. Apoc. iii. 19.
p. 139, l. 10. Rom. xii. 19.
l 20. Luke vi. 27, 28.
p. 140, l. 20. Ps. lvii. 11.
p. 141, l. 20. "Turn back," etc., *see* p. 87.
p. 142, l. 14. Ecclus. xxi. 10.
l. 22. Ps. lxxxix. 15.
p. 144, l. 3. St. James i. 2.
l. 5. Heb. xii. 11.
p. 145, l. 9. Is. iii. 12.
p. 147, l. 5. Lament. iv. 19.
p. 155, l. 21. Ecclus. xxvi. 7.
p. 159, l. 8. Jerem. ii. 24.
p. 162, l. 2. Is. xiv. 11.
l. 14. *Ibid.* lxv. 13.
l. 16. Apoc. xviii. 7.
p. 166, l. 15. Ps. xc. 5.
l. 17. Job xiv. 19.
l. 21. *Ibid.* xli. 23.
l. 24. *Ibid.* xxx. 13.
p. 167, l. 1. Is. xlvii. 11.
l. 4. Job xxx. 14.
l. 16. Hosea vii. 9.
l. 18. Prov. xxiii. 35.
p. 169, l. 8. 2 Cor. xi. 14.
p. 172, l. 18. 1 Cor. x. 13.

p. 173, l. 9. Matt. viii. 31.
p. 174, l. 17. Ps. cxviii. 8.
p. 175, l. 1. Ecclus. xxxiv. 11.
l. 23. 4 Kings vi. 16.
p. 176, l. 10. Cant. of Cant. iii. 4.
l. 16. Luke xxxii. 31.
l. 20. 2 Cor. xii. 7–9.
p. 179, l. 15. 2 Tim. ii. 5.
p. 181, l. 12. The old Latin form of these verses was: Mors tua, mors Domini, nota culpæ, gaudia celi, Judicii terror, figantur mente fideli.
p. 184, l. 4. B. Mus. Bib. Reg. MS. 17 A. xxvii. ff. 45 *b*.—47 *b*.
l. 20. Ps. lxxiii. 13.
p. 185, l. 17. Ecclus. xxxv. 17.
p. 186, l. 4. St. James iv. 7.
l. 7. 1 Peter v. 9.
l. 16. Heb. xi. 33.
p. 187, l. 14. John xiv. 27.
l. 25. *Ibid.* xiii. 35.
p. 189, l. 23. Eccles. iv. 10.
p. 190, l. 24. Judges xiv. 4.
p. 191, l. 1. "Long before," *see* pp. 97, 152.
l. 16. Acts iv. 32.
p. 192, l. 14. Ps. cxl. 5.
l. 16. Prov. xxvii. 6.
p. 193, l. 13. Matt. v. 9.
p. 194, l. 24. Luke ii. 7.
p. 195, l. 7. Matt. viii. 20; Luke ix. 58.
l. 15. *Ibid.* xxx. 17.
l. 19. *Ibid.* xii. 1.
p. 197, l. 1. 1 Peter iv. 1.
l. 3. Heb. xii. 3.
l. 5. *Ibid.* v. 4.
p. 198, l. 2. 1 Kings iv. 1, 2, and vii. 12.
l. 16. 2 Paralip. xx. 12

p. 199, l. 19. Is. li. 23.
p. 202, l. 17. "I spoke before at large," *see* p. 97.
p. 203, l. 9. 2 Kings iv. 5, 6.
p. 205, l. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 6.
p. 210, l. 1. Prov. xi. 2.
l. 15. Job xli. 34.
p. 211, l. 17. Matt. xi. 29.
l. 21. Ps. ciii. 10.
p. 213, l. 23. "thy file," *see* p. 126
p. 214, l. 2. Jerem. vi. 30.
p. 215, l. 4. Is. xlii. 8.
l. 5. Rom. xii. 19.
p. 217, l. 1. Gen. xlix. 3, 4.
l. 16. Ps. xxi. 21.
p. 219, l. 22. Is. ii. 10.
p. 220, l. 2. Ps. xxi. 17.
l. 8. Cant. of. Cant. ii. 14.
l. 15. Lament. iii. 65.
p. 222, l. 7. Ps. cxxxvi. 9.
l. 12. Cant. of Cant. ii. 15.
p. 225, l. 24. "Turn back," etc., *see* p. 87
p. 226, l. 13. Judith xiv. 18.
p. 227, l. 7. Judges i. 2.
l. 21. Judith x. 3.
p. 228, l. 2. Joel ii. 25.
l. 9. Zach. x. 6.
l. 16. Gen. xliii. 13.
p. 230, l. 5. 1 Cor. xi. 31.
l. 21. Amos iii. 8.
p. 231, l. 10. Matt. xxv. 41.
p. 233, l. 4. Judith viii. 1.
l. 5. Gen. xxxviii.
l. 12. *Ibid.* 29, 30.
p. 234, l. 6. Lament. i. 2.
l. 13. John viii. 44.
l. 17. Jerem. vi. 26.

p. 235, l. 4. Is. xxvii. 15.
l. 16. 2 Cor. vi. 15.
p. 242, l. 19. Lament. ii. 19.
p. 243, l. 1. Nahum iii. 5, 6.
p. 244, l. 6. Ps. lxxiv. 1.
l. 7. John xi. 7.
p. 245, l. 16. Ps. xxi. 16.
p. 246, l. 19. Ps. lxxi. 14.
l. 23. Hosea vii. 9.
p. 247, l. 1. Ecclus. v. 7.
l. 9. *Ibid.* xvii. 26.
l. 11. Eph. v. 14.
p. 250, l. 7. Heb. iv. 13.
p. 251, l. 6. James ii. 13.
l. 13. Deut. xxiv. 6.
p. 252, l. 11. Ps. x. 4.
p. 255, l. 2. Rom. vii. 18
p. 256, l. 15. Ps. xxvii. 7.
l. 24. Cant. of Cant. ii. 12.
p. 257, l. 2. Prov. viii. 31.
p. 262, l. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 12.
l. 14. Galat. vi. 14.
p. 264, l. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 11.
l. 16. Heb. xiii. 14.
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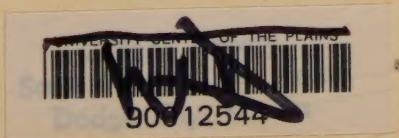
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